the weekly
Standard

APRIL 13, 1998 $2.95

SULTAN BILL
JAMES W. CEASER

BATTER UP?

THE DESIGNATED HITTER, THE OUTFIELD JACUZZI, AND THE DECLINE OF THE WEST

CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL • CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Pat Buchanan's History of America
DAVID FRUM

Newt Gingrich's History of Himself
FRED BARNES

#BXNFMUD ****** 5-DIGIT 94301
#UNZ0555B096 1#302604 WK 003811
RON UNZ AUG 03 98 000030
371 BALN 000278
555 BRYANT ST 001
PALO ALTO CA 94301-1704

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Bear could hardly walk. Then, in just a few days, he was his old self again."

SUSAN LLOYD, BEAR'S OWNER
MARLBOROUGH, CONNECTICUT

As a certified therapy dog, Bear has a very important job. Each week, he dispenses good cheer and affection when he visits nursing homes, like the one at Whitney Center in Hamden, Connecticut.

But when he developed arthritis—the same ailment that troubles many of his human friends—his weekly rounds were nearly curtailed.

Luckily for Bear, human disease isn't the only area for which Pfizer searches for cures. Thanks to a treatment made possible by research in veterinary medicine, he was soon up and running again.

And judging from the people who look forward to seeing him, Bear isn't the only one who's feeling better.

Pfizer

We're part of the cure.

www.pfizer.com
AOL keyword: pfizer

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A one-man art movement.

Alexander Calder was one of the great artistic innovators of the twentieth century. He worked in numerous media and invented radical new sculptural forms, most notably the mobile. Throughout his life, Calder continuously explored exciting new ways to move not only art, but also the viewer. GTE is proud to support a major retrospective at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, from March 29 to July 12, 1998, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the artist's birth. For more information, call (202) 737-4215 or visit www.nga.gov.

GTE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 30 • APRIL 13, 1998

4 SCRAPBOOK

6 CORRESPONDENCE

8 CASUAL
Joseph Epstein would like a word before he goes.

9 EDITORIAL
Droit de Seigneur

10 DELAY UP
The House whip raises his profile. *by* **MATTHEW REES**

13 TONY BLAIR'S MILLENNIUM
For 2000, a capacious British dome. *by* **DAVID BROOKS**

16 OIL FOR NOTHING?
Black gold, cheaper than bottled water. *by* **IRWIN M. STELZER**

17 CANADA'S TORY STORY
A conservative party on the road to oblivion. *by* **DAVID FRUM**

40 PARODY
Clinton in Africa, all decked out

Cover by Kevin Chadwick

20 A DHUMB IDEA AT 25
The failure of the designated-hitter experiment. *by* **CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL**

23 THE DECLINE OF BASEBALL CIVILIZATION
Our pastime isn't what it used to be, and neither are we. *by* **CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER**

27 IN THE COURT OF SULTAN BILL
In Clinton's White House, the political is personal. *by* **JAMES W. CEASER**

Books & Arts

31 TRADING DOWN Pat Buchanan tries economics in *The Great Betrayal*. *by* **DAVID FRUM**

34 CONFESSOR OF THE HOUSE Newt Gingrich's *Lessons Learned the Hard Way*. *by* **FRED BARNES**

35 PLAYING THE GREENS In *The Masters*, Curt Sampson travels to Augusta. *by* **JAY NORDLINGER**

38 SCULPTING HAPPINESS The National Gallery's Alexander Calder exhibition. *by* **PIA NORDLINGER**

William Kristol, *Editor and Publisher* **Fred Barnes,** *Executive Editor*
David Tell, *Opinion Editor* **David Brooks, Andrew Ferguson,** *Senior Editors* **Richard Starr, Claudia Winkler,** *Managing Editors*
J. Bottum, *Books & Arts Editor* **Christopher Caldwell,** *Senior Writer* **Jay Nordlinger,** *Associate Editor*
Tucker Carlson, Matt Labash, Matthew Rees, *Staff Writers* **Kent Bain,** *Art Director*
Victorino Matus, *Assistant Editor* **Pia Nordlinger, Christopher Stump,** *Reporters*
John J. Dilulio Jr., Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Brit Hume,
Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz *Contributing Editors*
David H. Bass, *Deputy Publisher* **Jennifer L. Felten,** *Business Manager*
Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Advertising & Marketing Manager* **John L. Mackall,** *Advertising Sales Manager* **Lauren C. Trotta,** *Circulation Director*
Doris Ridley, Carolyn Wimmer, *Executive Assistants* **Jonathan V. Last,** *Research Associate*
Kristin M. Alvarez, Jamie L. Kolton, Adam Langley *Staff Assistants*

THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly, except for the first week of January and the first week of September, by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-303-776-3605 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $2.95 ($3.50 Canadian). Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Natalie Harwood, 1-610-293-8540. Copyright 1998, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

The Audit Bureau Member

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Oh, So That's the Problem

In the latest issue of the liberal journal *American Prospect*, John Judis weighs in on the Lewinsky affair. Judis is deeply disturbed by the behavior of the media; specifically, by the failure of newspaper and TV owners to step in and squash their uppity, anti-Clinton reporters. The Scrapbook kids you not.

"There are multiple reasons why the press behaved so shamelessly," Judis writes, but the main one is "the abdication by media owners, publishers, top editors, and bureau chiefs of the leadership role they once played." Judis laments the passing of an era when "publishers like the [Washington] *Post*'s Eugene Meyer and Philip Graham or *Time*'s Henry Luce and bureau chiefs like the *New York Times*'s Scotty Reston participated in the deliberations of policy groups." Alas, these publishers "no longer conceive of themselves as guardians of the republic."

Needless to say, this is a dizzying ideological about-face: a left-liberal encomium to the good old days of powerful media magnates and meddling plutocrats. In the next issue: an admiring profile of William Randolph Hearst, liberal in a hurry.

Private P**ts

For reasons known only to themselves, executives of CBS television have decided to cede portions of their Saturday-night schedule to radio weirdo Howard Stern, whose approach to sexual matters falls somewhere between that of a 13-year-old boy and a tumescent St. Bernard. But guardians of the public airwaves are not to worry. "Yes, Howard talks about sex," said CBS's Mel Karmazin at a press conference last week. "But at 11:30 at night, in a way our lawyers are comfortable with, I don't know if it's so terrible to be talking about sex."

As readers know, The Scrapbook's approach to sex is highly refined, but still we must insist that "talking about sex in a way lawyers are comfortable with" is, to say the least, utterly pointless. ("Was that collateral estoppel good for you, honey?") Through the years Stern has overcome network censors, indignant sponsors, and FCC bureaucrats. But let's see him work his way around lawyered sex.

Paul Robeson, Hack

April 9 is the 100th anniversary of the Stalinist entertainer Paul Robeson's birth. Although he died more than two decades ago—and despite the fact that he made relatively few movies while he was alive—Robeson's life will be remembered over the coming year in no fewer than six documentary films, numerous magazine pieces, and a collection of essays from Rutgers University Press. How is Robeson's reputation faring in the press these days? Judging from a *New York Times* piece that appeared in the March 29 Sunday arts section—"A Giant Denied His Rightful Stature in Film"—not bad at all. "He proved one of the rare celebrity figures," writes Martin Duberman, "willing to place their careers in outright jeopardy to call attention to the bigotries and barbarities of the age."

Duberman should know better. A professor of history at the City University of New York, Duberman is also the author of a respected 1989 biography of Robeson. Among other things, Duberman establishes in the book that in 1949 Robeson met in Moscow with his friend Itzik Feffer, a Yiddish author who had been arrested by Stalin. Using sign language in a bugged hotel room, Feffer told Robeson about the anti-Semitic purges then beginning in the Soviet Union. By 1952 Feffer himself had been executed. What did Robeson have to say about the bigotries and barbarities taking place under Stalin? "I met Jewish people all over the place," the actor explained to a reporter when he returned from the Soviet Union after meeting with Feffer. "I heard no word about" anti-Semitism.

Doleful

Bob Dole reared his well-tanned head recently, giving his first serious interview since Monica Lewinsky's name became a household word. Dole being Dole, it should come as little surprise that his utterances were packed with reminders of why he didn't pass muster as a presidential candidate.

The most revealing snippet contained in the interview with Richard Berke of the *New York Times* was that Dole is more distressed over having been defeated in the 1988 Republican primaries by that preppy George Bush than over his drubbing from Clinton. "I still think more about 1988 and what happened in New Hampshire," said Dole. "I thought '88 was sort of my year." Dole also took a swipe

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at religious conservatives, asking, "What do these guys want?" He complained that "we keep getting caught in these one-issue things. They keep raising the bar."

This criticism wasn't limited to the *Times* interview. Dole, who posed as a pro-life conservative for much of his political career, had also recently endorsed the pro-choice candidate in Illinois's GOP primary to choose who would take on Democratic senator Carol Moseley-Braun. Dole said the conservative in the race, Peter Fitzgerald, was "out there on the fringe" and that the race was between "the mainstream and the extreme." Fitzgerald, however, prevailed in the March 17 primary. So what's Dole saying now? "Peter Fitzgerald has a winning message. . . . [He] will make an outstanding lawmaker in Washington."

The one encouraging sign from Dole's interview with the *Times* came when he was asked who he thought would win the Republican presidential nomination in 2000. He cited Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge and New York governor George Pataki—which probably kills any slight chance that either one had.

Fear Not the Tax Cut

The Senate provided a modest improvement in the tax-cut climate last week. During debate on the budget, a number of Senate Republicans protested that the tax cuts included in the budget resolution—just $30 billion—were too small. John Ashcroft, Jim Inhofe, Bob Smith, Sam Brownback, and Rod Grams all threatened to vote against the resolution, which would have killed it, if the GOP leadership couldn't find a way to provide more tax relief. The senators settled for a promise from Senate GOP leaders Trent Lott and Don Nickles that they will push for higher tax cuts when the House and Senate negotiators meet in a conference committee to iron out differences in their respective budget resolutions. A chief stumbling block on the tax front has been Pete Domenici, the tight-fisted chairman of the Senate Budget Committee.

Domenici and the House-Senate conferees might want to take a second look at an alternative budget resolution providing Reagan-style tax cuts. GOP senators Paul Coverdell and John McCain put forward a proposal providing for nearly $200 billion in tax relief, while also advancing the goal of creating a flatter, fairer, simpler tax code. Rather than provide Clinton-style targeted tax cuts, Coverdell and McCain want to adjust the tax brackets, allowing more income to fall under the 15 percent tax rate, rather than the more punitive 28 percent rate. The resolution received 38 Republican votes—more than expected.

Private polls show the Coverdell/McCain proposal is more popular than any of the other GOP tax-reform proposals being discussed. With few compelling issues to run on in the midterm elections, Coverdell/McCain offers a useful blueprint to budget negotiators, many of whom seem to have forgotten that sweeping tax cuts are supposed to be a priority of the Republican Congress.

Help Wanted

The Weekly Standard is seeking a full-time assistant art director. Candidates must be proficient users of QuarkXPress and Photoshop; have experience scanning black-and-white and four-color images; and possess good layout and design skills. Send résumé and work examples to The Weekly Standard, Personnel Dept., 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. No calls please.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BULLYING CHINA

You write of the human-rights resolution that eventually passed the Senate by a vote of 95-5 ("DiFi Returns," Scrapbook, March 9). I was one of the five dissenters.

The resolution condemned a country for violating human rights. Senators marched in near lockstep down to the Senate floor, with special interests and editorial boards throwing them candies of support. One by one they raved about how awful this particular country's record was on human rights over the years. There were stories of babies and women abused by the government of a certain country. The facts and the horrors were made clear to all those who listened. What country was the sponsor of such atrocities?

It could have been Laos. Or North Korea. Or maybe an African country like Angola or Kenya. It could have been Cambodia, Syria, or Libya, or Burundi, or Colombia, or Vietnam. In fact, it could have been any number of countries, but instead it was limited to just one: China. Why did the U.S. Senate single out one nation to bully?

Perhaps because the United States engages China whenever possible to ensure that we can improve human-rights conditions. Or perhaps because it was a large enough target that senators and their supporters felt they could not miss the opportunity to attack it. Perhaps it was an easy vote cast in an effort to score a few political points with the folks back home.

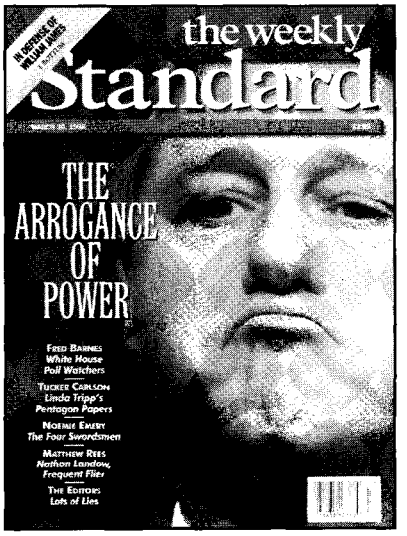
However, the reality is that this was not a productive way to pursue human-rights violations. Nothing was accomplished, and meaningless rhetoric prevailed. In fact, the resolution had little to do with human rights, and a lot to do with American politics. If the Senate were serious about human rights, it would have had a more complete list of human-rights violators, recognizing that abuses are far more widespread than one nation.

SEN. ROD GRAMS
WASHINGTON, DC

NO CROCK WITH BROCK

Eric Felten's piece on my former employee and admirer David Brock was very intelligent, but I would like to file several caveats regarding Felten's explication of the gaudiest self-immolation since the last Buddhist priest put flame to skirt in Saigon ("Clinton's Apologist," March 23).

Brock's Troopergate piece might strike Felten as "meandering." It was, however, not "sloppy." Editors at this magazine verified his reporting with the utmost care. That no major error has been discovered after four years of inspection by the Clintonites and their usual efforts at manipulation merely fortifies my point that its reportage was accurate. Furthermore, contrary to Brock's insinuation in his famously unreliable *Esquire* piece, I never told Brock I would pay the troopers for information. My only offer of support was the possible organization of a legal-



defense fund. Finally, let us remember that Brock's and the *Los Angeles Times*'s Troopergate pieces were not the only exposés of Clinton's abuse of power attested to by Arkansas state troopers. A few months after those pieces appeared, we published a Troopergate piece by Danny Wattenberg revealing Gov. Clinton in even more obvious abuses of power.

R. EMMETT TYRRELL JR.
THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR
ARLINGTON, VA

ELECT PAUL JOHNSON

Speaker Newt Gingrich's review of Paul Johnson's latest book, *A History of the American People*, reveals the core weakness of the Republican party's leadership ("Unafraid of Greatness," March 16).

Gingrich frets that Johnson's treatment of the Left for its actions over the past 35 years is too harsh and should be saved for separate publication.

If the Republican leadership had Johnson's courage and insight in linking past to present, the United States would not be the rudderless dreadnought it is today.

BRENT HALL
BELLEVIEW, FL

GERALDO'S HALOES

When I saw Geraldo Rivera on TV trashing Kenneth Starr, I had an instant flashback to his role in the movie *Bonfire of the Vanities* (Danielle Crittenden, "Geraldo's America," March 23). In the movie, Geraldo plays a TV reporter who is trying to beatify a thug. Seems he's playing this role again.

BARB MULVEY
FULTON, NY

WE'LL HOLD AT 50

As Matthew Rees notes, if Puerto Rico "became a state, Mississippi would no longer bear the dubious distinction of being the poorest state in the nation" ("And Puerto Rico Makes 51?," March 16). Actually, the poorest state is the state in which the GOP leadership finds itself, bypassing winning electoral issues such as school choice, partial-birth abortion, and privatization of Social Security in favor of deluding themselves that Mexican gangs in South Central Los Angeles are going to rush to register as Republicans because Newt Gingrich supports statehood for Puerto Rico.

Making Puerto Rico a state makes about as much sense as statehood for the Philippines, also acquired in the 1898 war with Spain. And the fact is, Puerto Ricans haven't exactly been clamoring for it. A referendum in 1993 found 46.3 percent wanting statehood. Alaska became a state with the support of 83 percent of its population. Hawaiian statehood had 94 percent.

DANIEL JOHN SOBIESKI
CHICAGO, IL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

Better Habits of the Heart

As the drafter of Louisiana's covenant marriage legislation, I was pleased to read Pia Nordlinger's "The Anti-Divorce Revolution" (March 2). It will give a boost to pending covenant-marriage legislation in Georgia, Oklahoma, Arizona, and Virginia. I am now thoroughly convinced that the covenant-marriage legislation, which focuses on making the marriage vow a commitment through the practical tools of mandatory pre-marital and pre-divorce counseling (and doesn't simply make divorce more difficult), is preferable to other solutions to the break-up of families. The legislation requires its proponents to change the culture, because covenant marriage is a choice that couples must be persuaded to adopt—even though consent to covenant marriage constitutes what most Americans would consider a selfless act. Covenant marriage requires "missionaries" to change the culture, one heart at a time.

Katherine S. Spaht
Baton Rouge, LA

A Bit of Charity for Lewis

I thought David Frum's editing of Anthony Lewis's columns on Watergate was hilarious ("Anthony Lewis: The President Must Go," March 9). However, Frum might have been more charitable. After all, Lewis was a cub reporter, so to speak, and (though in his late 40s) more inexperienced then. He had just come back from Haiphong Harbor, where he gleefully reported in the *New York Times* that Soviet and Chinese ships were crossing the U.S. mines dropped by air in the harbor. A great scoop had it been true.

Warren C. Fisher
Blue Bell, PA

Defending Scouts' Honor

Thank you for Larry P. Arnn's excellent article in defense of the Boy Scouts of America ("Scouts' Honor," March 30). He correctly cites their First Amendment freedom-of-association right in support of their membership policies. But he only alludes to another, even more widely understood right that supports them: free exercise of religion. Court orders to suppress the Boy Scouts' religious and moral beliefs, purposes, and requirements in considering applicants would seem to be direct and egregious violations of the free-exercise clause.

Eric V. Field
Golden, CO

The Great Santayana

Your *Books & Arts* section is a must-read, and J. Bottum's piece on the American philosopher William James ("The Autumn of American Liberalism," March 30) was as thought-provoking and stimulating as anything the magazine has published in the last few months.

But not a few conservatives would take exception with Bottum's assertion that James was "America's best philosopher"; this is surely wrong-headed. There is no doubt that James was a first-rate thinker. But his colleague George Santayana was, on the whole, the greater and more profound thinker, whose work extends far beyond the time in which he lived.

There is no debate, as Bottum suggests, that James is considered the greatest philosopher by most American liberals and those who write books about American philosophers. But Santayana is underrated and under-appreciated largely because his conservative ideas are out of vogue among those who have created James's "current fame."

It seems to me that the current radical ideology that reigns in American higher learning finds many of its taproots in the philosophy of James, Dewey, Peirce, and their brethren. What they wrought is evident on virtually every major American campus today.

Tim Goeglein
Washington, DC

J. Bottum Responds: ***In the real intellectual history of America, Charles Sanders Peirce is without much doubt the most brilliant philosopher, John Dewey the most influential, and William James the most sane. The cultured, wry, eccentric, and half-foreign George Santayana is unfortunately nowhere.***

The Great Insull

Samuel Insull may have been a failed capitalist, but he also was the key innovator in creating the electric-utility industry we enjoy today. Lawrence F. Kaplan's "No One's a Keynesian Now" (March 23) focuses only on Insull's declining years and his failures as a financier. But Insull's great achievements are responsible for the way we generate, transmit, buy, and regulate electricity. He made electric service not a luxury but a necessity. Insull deserves to be remembered for what he achieved, and not as a cartoon-like capitalist in a game of Monopoly.

Morton Lurie
Raleigh, NC

Secondhand Truths

Fred Barnes was exactly right regarding the tyranny of the government in its war on smokers ("The Most Despised Vice," March 23). He should have mentioned the one-sided weapon in the government's arsenal: It is not subject to truth-in-advertising laws for either its paid ads or its "public-service announcements."

Medical claims have to be backed up with complete disclosure. Witness the ads we have all seen in magazines for prescription drugs. I'd like to see the disclaimer for the absurd assertion that secondhand smoke kills 50,000 Americans every year. How about getting the whole country behind the idea of truth-in-advertising for government ads?

Carl Olson
Woodland Hills, CA

The Weekly Standard
welcomes letters to the editor.
Letters will be edited for length and clarity and must include the writer's name, address, and phone number.
All letters should be addressed:
Correspondence Editor
The Weekly Standard
1150 17th St., NW
Washington, DC 20036.
You may also fax letters: (202) 293-4901.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

A Wordsmith's Lament

One among my several immodest ambitions is to leave behind a word or two of my own invention before departing the planet. I want to leave a precise word, a useful word, a good word, a word that absorbs a sweet bit of truth. Neologism, not socialism, is the name of my desire.

The only person I have ever met who accomplished this was the late journalist Henry Fairlie, who is credited with the word "Establishment," usually used with a capital E. Fairlie didn't quite invent the word—there had long been an Established Church in England, and hence a Church Establishment—but he made it immensely more widespread by applying it to power structures generally. So successful was this that the very word "Establishment" became one of the shibboleth words of the 1960s.

My dear friend Edward Shils didn't, so far as I know, invent any words, but used language as well and to as brilliant comic effect as anyone I have known. By appropriate little twists and turns—"tweakings," the kids in computer science might call them—he came awfully close to the golden land of Neologia. I once described an acquaintance to him as rat-faced. "Yes," Edward replied, with his great adjective-making power, "he is rather rodential." He could also put a fine ironic spin on words, so that, for example, when I began to call what was formerly the University of Illinois Circle Campus (the campus in Chicago) "Vicious Circle," Edward took it a fine stride further and never referred to it as other than "Ol' Vish." Linguistically imaginative as he was, he forgot, alas, to invent any new words.

New words do get invented all the time. Technological and medical invention requires them. So, too, does social science. But they seem to me, for the most part, the wrong words, or at least not very amusing words. I was in a meeting recently where, in connection with a discussion of policy, two new and fairly empty portmanteau words were introduced. The first was *intermestic*, meant to show the connection, in our brave new world, between the international and the domestic. The other was *glocal*, meant to show the connection between the global and the local. Neither seems to me to deserve a cigar, and *glocal* has serious problems, not only in being difficult to pronounce but in sounding awfully like cloacal ("It's alimentary, my dear Watson").

I've invented three words that I thought might have had a shot at staying in the language. I've used all three in my own writing, but thus far only one looks to have a chance. My first gallant entry was not a word but the phrase "youth drag," meant to describe all those older players—guys with sad gray pony tails or motorcycle jackets, women in their seventies in miniskirts—who try to pass themselves off as young in spirit through their garb. *Youth drag*—I sent it up the flagpole, as they used to say in the advertising business, but no one saluted.

I tried again with *Bayarrea*, my word for too much talk about the delights of living in or near San Francisco. Much of this talk is about good living, food and wine, and fine views—and I find I soon get a snootful of it, which makes me want to heave sun-dried tomatoes at anyone engaging in it. The word may have been too specialized, too particular, like W.C. Fields's neologism *squeemudgeon* for a director who calls actors down for early-morning appearances but doesn't use them until later in the day. As for *Bayarrea*, I did what I could: I put it out on the doorstep, but the cat refused to lick it up.

My one possible contender is *virtucrat*, a word I first used in an article in the *New York Times Magazine* and which I have actually seen others use in print. George Will has used it, with generous attribution, in his column in the *Washington Post*. A few years ago, *Newsweek* actually had a cover story under the rubric "The Virtuecrats." They added the letter *e*, gave me no credit for it, and used the word not to mean, as I did, those people whose politics lend them the fine sense of elation that only false virtue makes possible, but instead those people—William Bennett and Lynne Cheney chief among them—who were stressing the need for virtue in the conduct of public and private life.

I've pushed hard for *virtucrat* over the years, but, somehow, I don't think it is going to make it either.

I may have to settle for inventing a phrase. Thus far, I can think of only two phrases that I can lay some claim to having invented, and both are really spinoffs. One is "In for a penny, in for a pounding"; and the other is "You live and you yearn." I've used both in print, and even more in conversation, but so far no call from the editor of the excellent *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. Depressing. What do you have to do around here to become immortal, anyway?

Joseph Epstein

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

DROIT DE SEIGNEUR

Let's see if we've got this straight. It is legally actionable—a tort—when blue-collar workers paste girlie posters inside their lockers. It is a tort when white-collar workers display beach-scene photographs of their wives on office desks. But when the governor of Arkansas dispatches an Arkansas state trooper to fetch him an Arkansas state employee so that he might brandish his Arkansas genitals before that employee and ask her to "kiss it" . . . well, that is *not* a tort. In fact, according to Judge Susan Webber Wright, Bill Clinton's concupiscent assault on Paula Jones in 1991 doesn't even constitute an "outrage" under relevant law.

What could this possibly mean? Could Judge Wright's decision to throw the Jones complaint out of court signal a new standard in sexual-misconduct litigation? Could the Anita Hill era finally be over? Could it be that workplace overtures much, much milder than Clinton's will no longer routinely trigger fat cash settlements—and feminist speechifying about how men "just don't get it"?

No such luck, we're guessing. Where sex-harassment is concerned, *Jones* v. *Clinton* will prove a one-time-only special. There is no new standard here. There is only the old, sickeningly familiar one—the one that seems always to exempt Bill Clinton from the ordinary rules of behavior that govern everyone else less favored by Gloria Steinem. Clinton is king. The king is different.

And now the king's sycophantic courtiers are arguing that his *Jones*-established *droit de seigneur* in civil law must be extended to immunity for *criminal* violations as well—that Judge Wright's ruling must somehow force Kenneth Starr to shut down his independent-counsel investigation into the White House of Ill Repute and thereby allow the country to return to "normal." The news media, reflecting a classic Age of Clinton confusion about the distinction between public relations and propriety, seem helpless before this argument. It is suddenly "inconceivable," a *New York Times* front-page news analysis declares, that Congress will ever mount impeachment proceedings concerning the president's "alleged lies and obstruction in a case that no longer exists."

As a technical matter, this is plainly wrong. Bill Clinton's lies and obstruction—the *Times*'s "alleged" is a darkly comic touch—have never been restricted to the Jones case. Remember Whitewater? The Whitewater "phase" of Starr's investigation, which has already secured multiple guilty pleas and felony convictions, is now in its final weeks. That Little Rock grand jury is finishing its work amid open speculation that further indictments will be released. Then, for that matter, there is Travelgate and the FBI-files fiasco.

And then finally, too, there remains Paula Jones. Examined carefully, it seems to us, Judge Wright's 39-page dismissal order is not nearly the slam-dunk legal opinion it purports to be. If Jones decides to pursue an appeal, there is a fair chance that the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will reverse Wright's ruling and order the case to trial.

But even if that doesn't happen, *Jones* v. *Clinton* will continue to challenge the nation's criminal law and constitutional order. Paula Jones, whatever the merits of her claim against the president, is history's designated flashlight on the basement soul of Bill Clinton's White House. Already revealed has been the worst infestation of executive-branch termites since 1974. The bugs are still down there, gnawing away at the institutional foundations of American public life. Will we let them be, or clean them out?

Forget what happened at the Excelsior Hotel in 1991; that has never been the paramount issue. Because of the Jones litigation, there is overwhelming, unrebutted, O.J. Simpson-quality circumstantial evidence that William Jefferson Clinton, while president of the United States, has:

¶ Committed felony perjury in a court-supervised deposition;

¶ Encouraged, abetted, or knowingly benefited from the perjury of others;

¶ Encouraged, abetted, or knowingly benefited from schemes to withhold truthful testimony and documentary evidence from the Jones court and from Ken Starr's federal grand jury;

¶ Supervised a White House staff that systematically used its public power and the public purse to facilitate and conceal these crimes—and to smear and dele-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gitimize anyone who knew, reported, or complained about them.

It is all there, right in front of our noses. It is a conspiracy to obstruct justice. It is not made "okay" by the fact that Paula Jones may have lost her standing before Susan Webber Wright. And the stupid mood swings of Washington media types to the contrary notwithstanding, it is not going to go away any time soon.

The independent-counsel investigation continues, as law and order demand. The White House has recently and ludicrously asserted an executive-privilege claim to block grand-jury testimony by Clinton aides Bruce Lindsey and Sidney Blumenthal. Starr and his colleagues will litigate that claim all the way to the Supreme Court, if necessary. They will win. And then, we suspect, Lindsey and Blumenthal will either corroborate damaging evidence the grand jury has already reviewed, or lie about it and get caught.

Before that happens, there will be grand-jury testimony by Linda Tripp. Monica Lewinsky, "that woman" with whom the president swears he had no "improper sexual relationship," will testify or be indicted. And sometime soon, maybe as early as next month, Kenneth Starr's office will deliver to Congress—and by extension, to the country as a whole—a full, interim report on his entire multi-faceted inquiry. What we know already is plenty bad enough. What we are bound to learn as the weeks roll by is surely even worse.

No doubt the dismissal of *Jones* v. *Clinton* is a victory of spin control for the president. No doubt his current popularity makes Republicans in Congress nervous. No doubt the country is embarrassed and impatient over the continuing, sex-fraught spectacle of Clinton's crimes and misdemeanors.

But it is not—*must* not—be the case that a final, formal accounting for those crimes and misdemeanors has become "inconceivable." We are not really a monarchy. Bill Clinton is not really our king. Not yet, anyway. ♦

DeLay Up

by Matthew Rees

In the babble about who's up and who's down among House Republican leaders, Tom DeLay of Texas doesn't get much play. He's majority whip, the third-ranking Republican, but he's usually described as a sharp-edged conservative, a hard-sell fund-raiser, and not much more. Meanwhile, the speculation about others is rampant. Newt Gingrich has just published a book full of *mea culpas*, fueling rumors he'll resign as speaker to run for president. And Gingrich's heir apparent, Dick Armey, is scrambling to fend off Appropriations Committee chairman Bob Livingston, who's waging a vigorous campaign to become the next speaker.

Now DeLay is making his move. Over the past few weeks, he's been defying Gingrich's ban on criticism of President Clinton's moral shortcomings and methodically producing the votes to pass a series of hotly contested bills dealing with disaster relief, labor unions, and abortion. The result: His prospects for elevation in the House Republican hierarchy have improved. Rep. David McIntosh, leader of the House conservative caucus, says DeLay is "starting to lay down a message for the party because other people aren't speaking up. I think he would be an excellent person to move up in leadership."

The most striking example of DeLay's filling the House GOP's leadership vacuum came in mid-March, when he zinged President Clinton for his failure to answer the allegations before him and for maligning those who charge him with wrongdoing. "If the president will just tell the truth to the American people," said DeLay, "it will go a long way toward bringing this ordeal to an end. The truth is the only thing now that can preserve the dignity of the presidency."

The speech, which received considerable media coverage, was the most biting criticism of Clinton on the sex scandals from a congressional Republican leader. DeLay says other Republicans have adopted the attitude that if someone is committing suicide, there's no need to shoot him. DeLay fears Clinton isn't committing suicide. And he had been itching to speak out for over a month anyway. The final straw was a meeting with 30 foster parents in Texas (DeLay and his wife became the legal guardians of a teenage girl last year) who all said they believed Clinton was a good role model.

One indication of DeLay's new willingness to go it alone is that he didn't tell Gingrich about the speech until a few hours before he delivered it. In an environment where staying "on message" is all-important, DeLay's decision to speak out was mutiny. Yet he says he received a "wonderful" response to the speech and that it was his moderate House colleagues who were most complimentary.

DeLay told me the speech was not part of a larger strategy and that he'll continue to speak out. As House

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

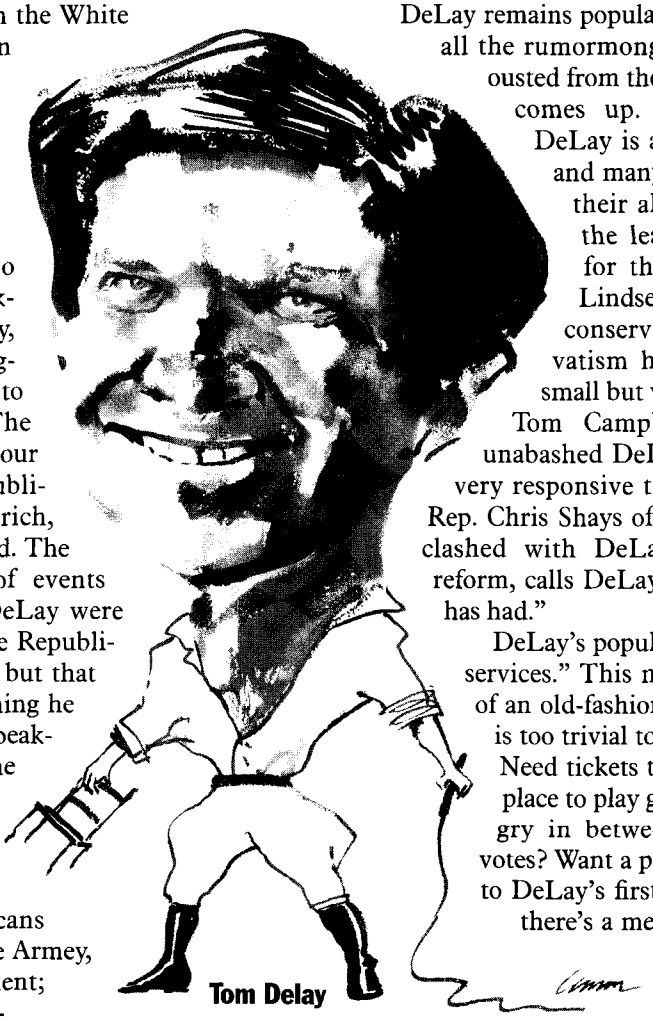
Republicans grapple with the twin demons of a popular president and a leadership team intent on compromise, many of DeLay's colleagues hope he will continue to assert himself. "While Tom has traditionally been a behind-the-scenes guy," says Rep. Bill Paxon, now exiled from Gingrich's inner circle, "many people have been encouraging him to step out."

DeLay's public profile is relatively low in part because he's not a polished speaker. His likening of the EPA to the Gestapo became a favorite blunder of House Democrats, and recently he awkwardly illustrated his disgust with the White House's shifting definition of sexual harassment by pointing to a female reporter at a press conference and wondering about the reaction if he were to grab her breast.

But DeLay has also largely stayed in the background since last July, when he was a central figure in the botched effort to dump Gingrich. The episode—still a topic du jour among Capitol Hill Republicans—left DeLay, Gingrich, and Armey bitterly divided. The most credible version of events holds that Armey and DeLay were plotting with other House Republicans to remove Gingrich, but that Armey bailed out on learning he wasn't going to be made speaker and then tried to blame the whole thing on DeLay.

Yet it was DeLay who emerged strengthened, as many Republicans appreciated that he, unlike Armey, never denied his involvement; when he explained his version of events at a post-coup meeting, his colleagues gave him a standing ovation. While there are few signs of tension today, Gingrich, Armey, and DeLay have nowhere near the working relationship they had following the 1994 election. DeLay, in fact, has been frozen out. But he insists the failed putsch had a positive long-term outcome, spurring Gingrich to become more disciplined and to realize "that Bill Paxon and Tom DeLay were probably his best friends."

DeLay and Gingrich have never been particularly close. Elected in 1984, when Republicans seemed a permanent minority, DeLay never cozied up to the bombastic Gingrich. Indeed, in 1989, when Gingrich sought the number-two position in the House GOP hierarchy, DeLay managed the campaign of Gingrich's opponent, the late Ed Madigan of Illinois. Gingrich prevailed, and it cost DeLay an appointed position as deputy whip. Similarly, when DeLay sought the whip's job after the '94 election, Gingrich backed Bob Walker of Pennsylvania. But DeLay outhustled Walker and one other candidate, Bill McCollum of Florida, and won on the first ballot.


Tom Delay

DeLay remains popular with his colleagues. Amid all the rumormongering about who could be ousted from the leadership, his name never comes up. One reason is ideology. DeLay is a rock-ribbed conservative, and many conservatives view him as their ally in the upper reaches of the leadership. "God made him for the job of whip," says Rep. Lindsey Graham, a South Carolina conservative. Yet DeLay's conservatism hasn't alienated the GOP's small but vocal moderate faction. Rep. Tom Campbell of California is an unabashed DeLay fan, saying, "He's been very responsive to my concerns." And even Rep. Chris Shays of Connecticut, who recently clashed with DeLay over campaign-finance reform, calls DeLay "the best whip a majority has had."

DeLay's popularity also rests on "member services." This means DeLay plays the role of an old-fashioned political boss: No favor is too trivial to do for a fellow Republican. Need tickets to a Redskins game? Need a place to play golf? Consider it done. Hungry in between the House's late-night votes? Want a place to make some calls? Go to DeLay's first-floor Capitol office, where there's a members' lounge stocked with phones, beer, and barbecued chicken. DeLay also runs a job bank out of his office, connecting Republican staffers with House Republicans and the private sector. As if that weren't enough, DeLay's fund-raising is matched by few other Republicans: Since the 1996 election, he's helped raise $1.6 million for GOP candidates and party organizations.

The one recent blemish on DeLay's record involves James Dobson, a revered figure among religious conservatives. Dobson, who hosts a nationally syndicated daily radio program, has been severely critical of congressional Republicans for their timidity. He

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had a 45-minute meeting with DeLay and Armey in Washington on March 19, and it didn't go as planned.

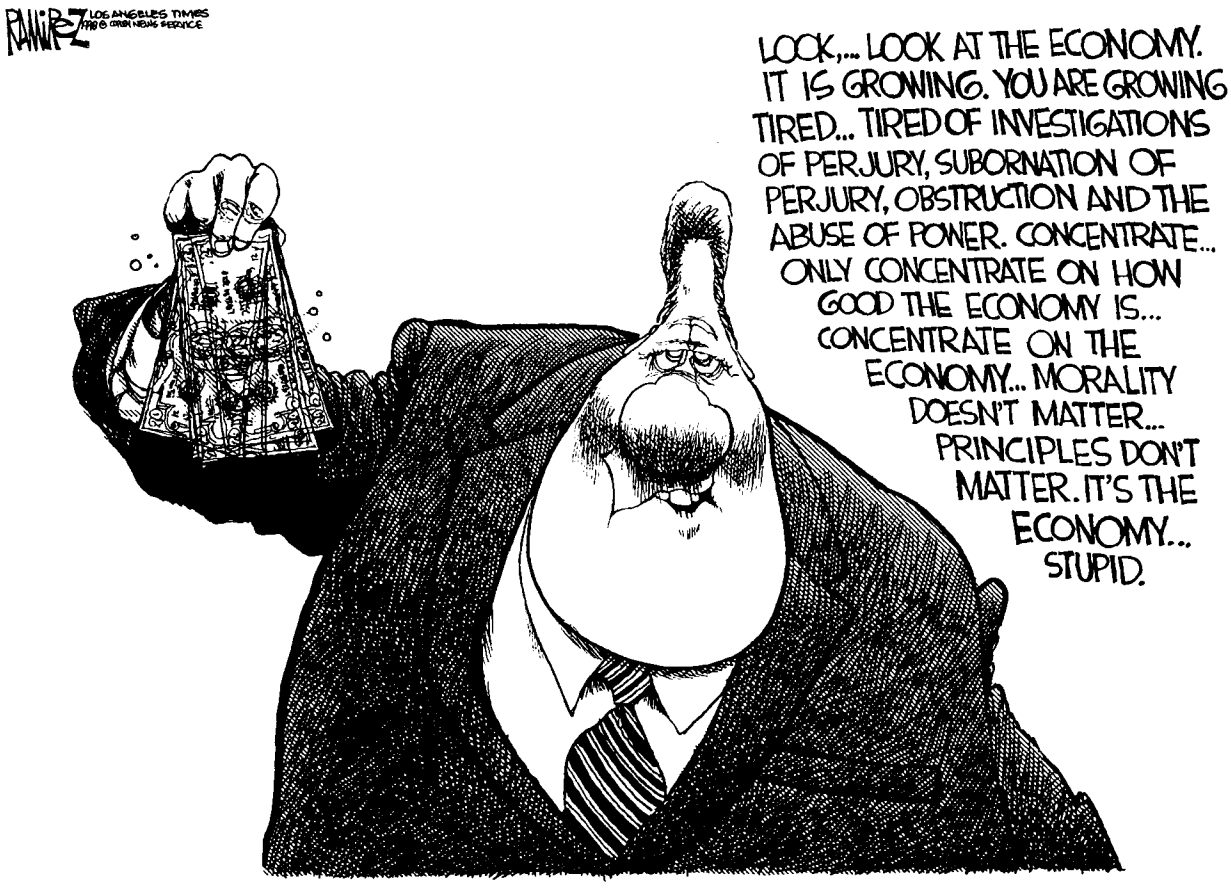
Armey opened the meeting with a prayer, quoted Scripture, and offered Dobson hope that a bolder agenda was ahead. But as Dobson would later describe the meeting in an open letter, DeLay was "argumentative, defensive, and accusatory. Instead of grappling with Republican failures . . . he denied that a paralysis had occurred and trumpeted the meager accomplishments of the party."

The public lashing stung DeLay, as he credits Dobson with having "turned my life around when I first came to Congress. He brought me back to Christ." The feud, however, proved short-lived. When DeLay told reporters the criticism "deeply hurt my feelings," Dobson called to patch things up. They've since spoken twice, and each told me he bears the other no ill will. Dobson says of DeLay, "He's a natural ally."

There are signs DeLay's dust-up with Dobson has prompted him to speak out further. He's lambasted Clinton's apologies in Africa as the actions of a "flower child with gray hair doing exactly what he did back in the '60s" and charged that as a result of Democratic opposition to paperwork-reduction legislation, "Karl Marx must be turning over in his grave." The day after the Paula Jones case was dismissed, DeLay released a statement declaring that the dismissal "may have been a short-term legal victory for the president, but the whole affair has been a long-term loss for the stature of the presidency and for our country."

So is DeLay bidding for higher office? "I like being whip," he says. "It's where my talents are." Yet people close to DeLay note that when the majority leader's post opens up—term limits prevent Armey from staying in the job past 2000—he'll have a difficult time not running. House Republicans may want someone without DeLay's liabilities as a communicator, but his allies point out that the other likely candidates aren't exactly Reaganesque. Which is to say that the political stock of Tom DeLay—once described by two *Washington Post* reporters as having "the persona of a pledge leader in a southern frat house"—may be about to enter a bull market.

Matthew Rees is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.



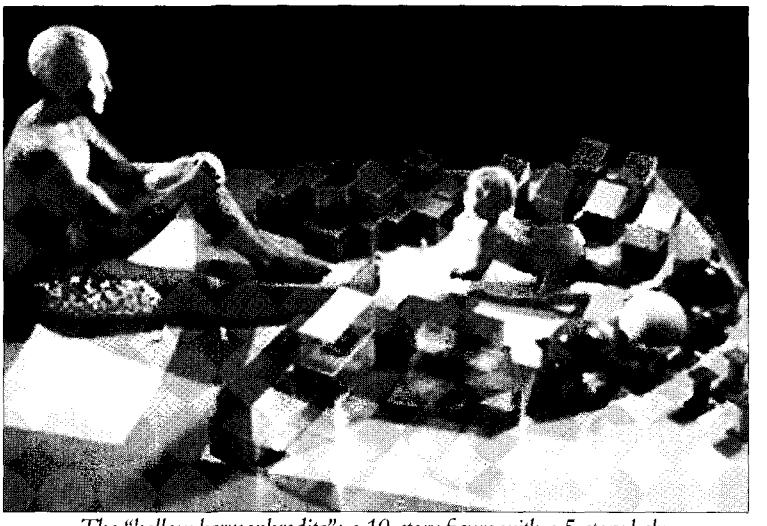
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tony Blair's Millennium

by David Brooks

Does any country have more reasons to be proud of itself than Great Britain? Twenty-five years ago the United Kingdom was a basketcase. Its economy was a shambles, the IMF had to take over its fiscal policy, and its people lived in cold flats with bad plumbing. Today, Britain has one of the most vibrant economies in the world. Unemployment is lower than in Europe, and investment is higher. The nation's capital is gleaming, its teeth are healthy, and its culture is dynamic—the Academy Awards ceremony had more British accents than Harrods. Yet Britain is tongue-tied on one subject: itself.

Granted, the country can still put on a mighty display of jingoism. If you are watching a race on the BBC and a British runner comes in 11th, don't expect to find out who ranked in the top 10. If a British au pair kills an American baby, the Brits can still work themselves into a tabloid-thumping lather defending the au pair. But Britain can't seem to speak intelligently about its national accomplishments. Its elites are so afraid of coming off like John Bull superpatriots, they can't express mature national pride or subtle ideas about their national identity. Not that we are any better. America is similarly inarticulate when it comes to itself. It's just that our shortcomings are not so on display, because we are not throwing a big national celebration to herald the millennium.



The "hollow hermaphrodite": a 10-story figure with a 5-story baby

It was Margaret Thatcher who came up with the idea for the Millennium Exhibition that is now being built in Greenwich. In 1987, just after her third electoral victory, Mrs. Thatcher declared, "You've got to make the millennium some kind of target. All of us are trying to think of [a celebration] now." It's not hard to imagine the direction Mrs. Thatcher was headed. The 1851 Crystal Palace exhibition sealed Britain's place as leader of the Industrial Revolution. The 1951 Festival of Britain celebrated Britain's emergence from the trauma of World War II. A Thatcherite millennial exhibition would pay homage to Britain's rediscovered spirit of enterprise, which had reversed the course of national decline.

But Thatcher's government didn't survive to do much planning. Under John Major, responsibility for the project was picked up by deputy prime minister Michael Heseltine, an ambitious wet. Heseltine went ahead with the technical planning—he selected a site, approved the massive Dome that will be the exposition's central feature, and began the prerequisite environmental cleanup. But characteristically, the Majorites gave almost no thought to what should go inside the Dome or what the exposition's message should be.

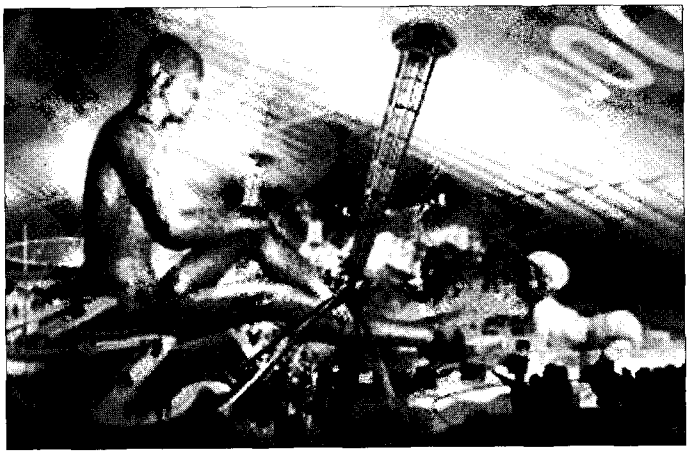
A year ago, Tory ministers held secret meetings with the opposition. It was clear that Labour was about to win the coming election, and the government wanted to persuade the Labourites to go ahead with the project once in office. Most of the shadow cabinet was opposed, but John Prescott, an old fashioned, gruff, pint-o'-beer guy who would soon be Tony Blair's deputy prime minister, was enthusiastic. He got conservative journalist Simon Jenkins, a member of the exposition commission, to write a letter to Blair to sell him on the plan. Cleverly perceiving the essence of Blairism, Prescott told Jenkins to frame the letter around Blair's children. What sort of experience would children have in the Dome? How would they be inspired? Blair was won over, and the project was off to the races—imbued in turn with the styles of three governments: the virile and sometimes grating big think of Thatcher, the empty technique of Major, and the mushy big think of Blair.

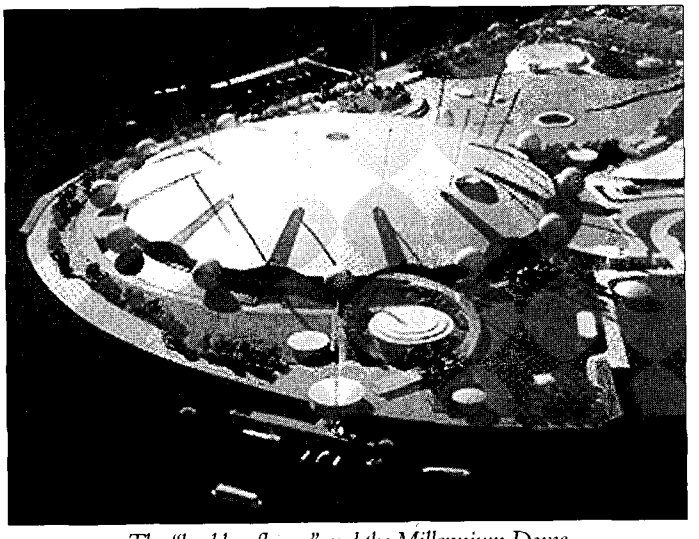
Blair assigned the project to his minister with ego but without portfolio Peter Mandelson. Mandelson is the resident genius of British politics, a sort of campaign guru and policy maven rolled into one. He is also the grandson of Herbert Morris, who was the head of the 1951 Festival of Britain. As Mandelson

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reminds people every 15 seconds or so, that festival met with tremendous scorn when it was first proposed. But it became enormously popular with the British people and ultimately quite profitable for the Exchequer.

It was Mandelson's job to figure out what should go inside the Dome. Now, some might argue that a government has no business rounding up $1.3 billion for a big exposition if it has no idea what it hopes to accomplish beyond throwing a telegenic party. But the decision to go ahead had been made. The Festival of Britain had been about the permanent features of Britain, the qualities that saw the nation through crises like the Second World War. So it had pavilions on the Land of Britain, the Sea and Ships, the Minerals of the Island, and one on the national legends and spirit called the Lion and the Unicorn. Mandelson's 2000 Dome, by contrast, has themes but no central vision.





The "boobless floozy" and the Millennium Dome

Part of the problem is that most of the planning was assigned to architects and designers. Wonderful though they may be as individuals, these people as a group are about as anti-nationalist in their thinking as anyone can be. They spend their professional lives working on various projects around the world, then moving on. They are more connected to the floating global community of show business than they are to any nation. So in the 2000 exposition, unlike its predecessors, Britishness is lost under platitudes about the shrinking global village, the fragility of the earth, and the brotherhood of man. There is no reason for the British government to be spending money to add to the flood of noble sentiments on these themes. Meanwhile, the one section of the show that is devoted to British identity—annoyingly called uk@now—is being designed by a French architect.

In addition to being anti-nationalist, show-business people and designers are averse to making any argument, to coming to a point. Their idea of a festival is apt to be a spectacle with nothing to say.

The supposed theme for the Millennium Exhibition is "Time's Arrow," which is fitting enough for Greenwich and the year 2000 but doesn't actually tie you down to anything. So the installations, which are still only half designed, have names like Dreamscape, Serious Play, and Spirit Level. Dreams, play, and spirit are fine. For the designers, these concepts lend themselves to eye-catching display. But they are also vague, intangible, and conducive to sentimentality. Is it possible to imagine leaving an installation called Spirit Level with anything more than a sense of fuzzy uplift?

It's also significant that the designers have renamed the whole affair. It is no longer called the Millennium Exhibition. Now it is the Millennium Experience. An exhibition suggests some authorial figure presenting visitors with an organized body of information, which they can accept or argue with or ignore. An experience, on the other hand, is more democratic and less hierarchical, and it has no unifying point. People just wander around and experience whatever they experience. Some sections promise interesting bits of knowledge—how the body works, what the schoolroom of the future will be like, how environmental damage is assessed—but it is hard to see how this will be distinct from the stuff people can pick up in a book or on the Internet or at another exposition or theme park.

Inside the Dome, the dominant feature will be an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enormous sculpture: a ten-story, seated human figure, watching a five-story baby crawl. This figure would seem to require the designers to make a concrete decision: male or female? At the moment, they have finessed this. The figure is androgynous. It looks a little like a puffy man, but it could be a formless woman. The mocking British press has fallen all over itself to come up with names for the thing—the "boobless floozy" and the "hollow hermaphrodite" being two of my favorites. Pictures of 1 million children will be pasted on its thigh.

On February 24, Tony Blair presented the general outlines of the Dome Experience at the Royal Festival Hall, the spot where the 1951 festival plans had been unveiled. The British press responded with a tidal wave of scorn. This started out as a low rumble echoing down Fleet Street, then built slowly and relentlessly upon itself, with words of disgust piling on smirks, cynicism, and ridicule, until it became a towering wall of bad vibes. And now it has come crashing down with a deafening noise on the head of Peter Mandelson.

Critics hit the project from every conceivable angle: for being too Disneylike; for falling short of Disney standards; for diverting attention from the needs of the poor; for being grandiose; for being pop-culture obsessed; for being too cheerful; for being anti-environmental. Blair tried to strike back at the "cynics and snipers," but the onslaught was relentless. Still missing, moreover, was any suggestion of what an exposition marking the millennium should be. Or what sort of ethic could unify the British nation.

Finally, a few brave heads began to poke up above the parapets. "I am a member of the most reviled and outcast minority on these islands, harried through the streets, silently pitied by generous-minded relatives and the object of sniggering derision at parties," wrote one Andrew Marr in the *Independent*: "I am rather in favor of the Millennium Dome." Eventually, some editorial pages began wondering how the country could make the best of what had been begun.

But Britain—like the United States, one suspects—has lost its capacity for intelligent national pride. Instead, the Dome Experience will exemplify some of the most recognizable aspects of contemporary culture. It will be a mixture of visual wizardry and verbal backwardness. It will accumulate great masses of diverse information and synthesize them very poorly. It will be technically amazing but largely ahistorical. It will probably be fun, but it won't be memorable. It will be flimsy and shallow, dumbed down for the sake of phony populism.

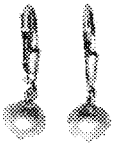
Past expositions presented visitors with an interpretation of their national identity and helped them integrate recent accomplishments and current aspirations into the story. All of that is missing from the Millennium Experience, and only disjointed images are left.

David Brooks is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

The most "with-it" jewelry of this season...

Princess Pearl/Silver Set only $99*

**But read this ad for an even better deal!*



You have seen a beloved personage wearing this beautiful youthful jewelry. Now you too can own this stunning Set, equal in quality and execution to the one you have come to admire. Fifteen fresh-water 7.5–8 mm. pearls are strung on a delicate sterling silver filigree chain to form this exquisite 18-inch necklace. The matching 8-inch bracelet carries seven of the same carefully selected pearls. If you wish, you can combine necklace and bracelet to form a 26-inch opera-length necklace. It looks fabulous! To top it all off, a pair of pearl-capped pierced or clip earrings complete the ensemble.

This beautiful jewelry is made in the United States. We have large commitments with these talented craftspeople and can therefore bring it to you at the astonishing price of just $99. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two Sets for $198 and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Do something wonderful for yourself or for someone you love. Get the most "with-it" jewelry of the season and order your Princess Pearl/Silver Set(s) today!

You may order by toll-free phone, by mail, or by fax and pay by check or Visa/MasterCard. Please give order **#1064D763a** for the Set with the pierced earrings or **#1065D763b** for the Set with the clip earrings. We need daytime phone # for all orders. Add $4.95 standard shipping/insurance charge (plus sales tax for California delivery). You have 30-day refund and one-year warranty. We do not refund shipping charges.

For customer service, please call (415) 543-6675. For wholesale orders, call Chris Simpson at the same number.

since 1967
haverhills®
185 Berry St., San Francisco, CA 94107

✆ Order by toll-free phone: (800) 797-7367 or by fax: (415) 546-7808 ✆

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OIL FOR NOTHING?

by Irwin M. Stelzer

OIL IS NOT LIKE OTHER COMMODITIES, as Winston Churchill found out early in his career. In 1911, Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, decided to rest Britain's naval supremacy on oil. Welsh coal might have been near at hand and secure, but oil offered the advantage of speed and efficiency. Like many statesmen who were to follow him, Churchill found that reliance on oil involved him in the industry's economics and the Middle East's politics: The Admiralty soon purchased a controlling interest in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in order to assure itself a secure supply and avoid what it claimed were the extortionate prices being charged by Shell.

Plus ça change . . . Some 80 years later, George Bush also found that oil is unique. Nations will send men to die in order to insure an unimpeded flow of the stuff. Indeed, they will send men to die merely to make sure that the price is right. That's what George Bush did when Saddam Hussein's grab for Kuwait threatened to give him control over oil supplies and prices.

And with reason. When a series of "oil price shocks" hit the world in the 1970s, they brought on stagflation. Unable to develop appropriate policies to cope with crude-oil prices that rose from under $2 per barrel in 1972 to over $10 in 1974, and then to almost $36 in 1980, the industrialized nations entered a prolonged period of high inflation and low economic growth. The lesson was well learned. When America demonstrated to the world in 1991 that we would fight rather than allow an Iraqi dictator to gain control of the oil fields of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, we laid the basis for the stable energy supplies that have helped fuel a long-running, inflation-free era of prosperity.

With stability thus assured, markets have worked their customary magic. Between early 1997 and early 1998, oil prices fell in half; only a few weeks ago, a gallon of gasoline was selling in some places for less than it had since the 1920s. The causes of this decline are various: Amazing advances in technology have driven down the cost of finding and producing a barrel of oil; the sclerotic economies of Western Europe have not grown, and Asia's economies are in free-fall, pushing down demand for oil in those parts of the world; and the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) have been unwilling to withhold their oil from the market in order to drive prices up. They have repeatedly agreed to production limits, and then cheated on those agreements.

Now, we are told, this era of cheap oil is over. With much fanfare, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, and Mexico (the last not an OPEC member) have cobbled together an agreement to cut back their output, with the Saudis reducing the flow of oil from their prolific wells by 300,000 barrels a day to match an equal cut by Mexico and Venezuela combined. At the OPEC meeting in Vienna on March 22, other producing countries hopped on board the reinvigorated cartel: Kuwait, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Libya, and Iran promised cutbacks, and even nonmember Norway emulated Mexico in volunteering to hold some oil off the market. Ironically, if the deal holds, the only country that will be selling more oil in the near future is Iraq, its increased output being the U.N.'s reward to Saddam for once again promising to honor the agreements he long ago agreed to honor.

DON'T RUSH TO TRADE IN YOUR GAS-GUZZLER FOR A GEO. EVEN IF THE OPEC AGREEMENT HOLDS, THE PRICE OF OIL WON'T GO UP VERY MUCH.

Mexico was the key to the deal. Its energy minister, Luis Tellez, acted as honest broker between the Saudis, who more or less adhere to their quotas, and the Venezuelans, who never do. More important, by agreeing to cut its own production, Mexico assured the others that it would not seek to win a bigger share of the U.S. market by filling any gaps that production cutbacks in Saudi Arabia and Venezuela might create.

But don't rush to trade in your gas-guzzling sport-utility vehicle for a Geo. Even if the agreement holds, the cutbacks in supply won't be big enough to affect the price of oil very much, if at all. The combined reductions in output are likely to total only 1.5 million barrels per day, out of a total of over 75 million. Better still, count on the agreement's coming unraveled. There is no honor among thieves, and even less among cartelists.

Cheating has been the order of the day since the OPEC cartel was first founded in Baghdad in 1960. Every member has a huge incentive to free ride. Here is the reasoning of an oil-country finance minister desperate for cash to finance the lifestyles of his nation's rich and famous princes, its latest arms purchases, and the welfare state that keeps the people in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

line: If everyone except me adheres to his quota, I can produce some extra oil and sell it covertly at the new, higher price. One or two decisions like that, and enough extra oil flows to market to cause prices to crack.

That has been the history of cartels generally, and of OPEC in particular. Moreover, OPEC's share of world output has fallen from around 75 percent in the mid-1970s to about 40 percent now. The reason is simple: New supplies are increasingly being found in countries beyond OPEC's control. Some of these new producing areas are in woefully poor West African countries and in nations that were once part of the Soviet Union. They need hard currency, and they need it now.

So do Iran and Iraq. Iran's agreement to curtail its output was not exactly a gesture of solidarity with its fellow cartelists. America's policy of discouraging outside investment in Iran, combined with the Mullahs' hostility to such investment, has reduced the country's oil infrastructure to such a run-down condition that Iran could not increase the flow of oil from its under-maintained wells even if it wanted to. But that is about to change. Iran's policy of wooing the West seems to be working, despite its refusal to apologize for its taking of American hostages or to rescind the death order against Salman Rushdie. The Europeans are increasingly unafraid of the consequences, if such there any longer be, of defying America. France's Total and other European oil companies are likely to begin pouring money into Iran. And into Iraq, to increase that country's production capability.

In short, the world's capacity to produce oil will continue to increase. And the cost of finding and producing oil will continue to fall—to as low as $5 per barrel. The temptation to step up output will prove irresistible, increasing the supply coming to market. After all, at a cost of $5 per barrel, so-called "depressed" prices of $12-15 still leave a profit margin large enough to tempt producers to cheat on their agreed quotas. Meanwhile, worldwide demand for oil will fail to keep pace with supply, as the recession in Japan and other Asian countries continues, environmentalists force drivers into more fuel-efficient (but, alas, more lethal) cars, and revenue-hungry governments in industrialized countries dampen demand by raising gasoline taxes and concocting new levies on the use of oil and other carbon-based fuels.

So fear not: The new OPEC press release is no serious threat to America's burgeoning prosperity. Fill 'er up.

Irwin M. Stelzer is director of regulatory policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

Canada's Tory Story

by David Frum

The once-mighty Progressive Conservative party of Canada took another step toward extinction late last month. There are not many left to go.

In a move for which he had been preparing since Christmas, party leader Jean Charest stepped down. Charest is off to Quebec City to take over the leadership of the provincial Liberal party. That sounds odd, and indeed it is odd. But the Liberals are now the only party in Quebec that doesn't want to split off from the rest of Canada. And the polls show that Charest is the most popular politician in Quebec. So a marriage of convenience was brokered.

Charest leaves behind a deeply troubled party. The Conservatives are $10 million in debt—an immense sum by Canadian political standards—and have made no progress in reducing that debt in the year since the 1997 federal election. Worse, Charest's failure as a strategist has been even more dismal than his failure as a fund-raiser. He has steered the party to the left (even as the cunning federal Liberals were leaning to the right) and personally oversaw the purge of the few remaining right-of-center party activists. That course may have gratified Charest's leftish personal instincts, but it has alienated—probably forever—the Progressive Conservatives' old electoral base in western Canada and Ontario beyond Toronto. In the old days, the Conservative party would often tilt left opportunistically, knowing that the Right had "nowhere to go." Since the founding of the populist Reform party, however, the Canadian Right has had an alternative—and now, thanks very largely to Charest, the alternative is bigger, richer, and more popular than the party from which it sprang.

Reform is now the official Opposition in Canada's House of Commons. The Conservatives, by contrast, elected only 20 members in 1997—up from the two they had elected in 1993, but still a fifth-place finish. (The Liberals came first, followed by the Reform party, the separatist Bloc Québecois, and the socialist

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Democratic party.) The Conservatives still control three provincial governments—Manitoba, oil-rich Alberta, and all-important Ontario—but in Alberta and Ontario the premiers preside over Conservative-Reform coalitions that owe scant loyalty to the Progressive Conservative party in Ottawa.

So desperate is the party's condition that it's not clear any credible politician will seek to succeed Charest. The best alternative—Alberta premier Ralph Klein, a beer-loving former sportscaster who balanced his province's budget by cutting its spending by some 25 percent and now enjoys better than 70 percent approval in the polls—announced his non-candidacy within 24 hours of Charest's stepping down. Ontario premier Mike Harris, in many ways the most successful conservative politician in North America, will not seek the job either: In Canada's decentralized federation, Ontario premier is a better job than prime minister of Canada. Manitoba's uncharismatic but solid Gary Filmon has also thus far shown little interest in the federal leadership.

That leaves the field to retreads and dark horses. Former prime minister Brian Mulroney's predecessor as Conservative leader, the legendarily incompetent Joe Clark, is rumored to be considering another run for his old job. Investment banker Hugh Segal, a former aide to Brian Mulroney, and a young MP named Peter McKay will also probably pursue it. But none of the three has much hope of being taken seriously by the voting public, and all of them express their determination to maintain the one policy of Charest's that has contributed the most to the party's present disarray: his adamant refusal to strike some sort of deal with Reform party leader Preston Manning.

For Charest and the other hard-line Conservative partisans, Manning is a traitor, who helped bring down the Conservative government of 1984-93. They damn Manning's die-hard opposition to any special constitutional status for Quebec as a form of bigotry. (Never mind that, if it is bigotry, then an overwhelming majority of English Canadians must be condemned as bigots.)

Charest's refusal to do a deal with Reform doomed the Conservatives' hopes in 1997. Charest is a great favorite of the Ottawa press corps, and in that parochial little capital, it is easy for politicians to believe their own clips. Reading the papers and listening to the television news, Charest convinced himself that he actually stood an excellent chance of sweeping the country in 1997, and that he had no reason to bargain with anybody. All he needed to do was hold fast to the ideological middle.

Not a very skillful tactician, Charest failed to notice that the middle had moved from where it had been the last time he paid attention to it. Between 1993 and 1997, the governing Liberals had held the line on government spending and reduced Canada's once-terrifying budget deficit to virtually zero. Since 1997, Charest has found himself floundering to the Liberals' left, at the head of a party that was too leftish for the country's growing Right, but still too rightist for the country's shrinking Left, too French for the English, too English for the French.

But while Charest's orneriness has crippled the Conservatives, it also harmed Reform. The Conservative party, bloodied though it is, is not quite dead yet. It still wins the support of enterprise-minded voters, especially in the cities of Ontario (where about one-third of the country lives), who are put off by Reform's faint social conservatism and its penchant for opportunistic populist stunts, and who fear that Reform's unyielding opposition to special status for Quebec might precipitate a costly and dangerous secession crisis. The Conservatives can count on perhaps 10 percent of the vote for at least one more election. In a five-way split, that's enough to keep the Liberals in power and Reform out.

IF CANADA'S CONSERVATIVES ARE EVER AGAIN TO FORM A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, EITHER THE PARTIES OF THE RIGHT MUST MERGE, OR ONE MUST DIE.

If Canada's conservatives are ever again to form a national government, either the parties of the right must merge, or one must die. A merger would have been wiser: It would have been quicker, and it might have imported into a united party of the right the Conservatives' virtues: their greater experience of government, their better understanding of Quebec. But if Charest delayed the merger solution, he can at least claim credit for accelerating the extinction alternative. The party is in much worse shape today than it would have been had he showed more sense, which means that this fratricidal conflict is that much closer to a resolution. Charest bows out leaving his party on the brink of its demise, and without a plausible successor. That's bad news for the Conservatives as a party. But it may be very good news for conservatism as a cause—because it means that the day of the reunification of Canada's squabbling right-of-center factions has come that much closer to dawning.

David Frum is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Big Dogs.
No appetite for competition.

The Big Dogs, MCI and AT&T, have no appetite for competition.

They claim they can't compete in local telephone markets. It's just too difficult. It requires too much effort.

But recently the Federal Communications Commission held hearings in which smaller, local competitors described their success in competing against the Bell companies.

The little dogs are competing just fine.

- Scores of smaller companies across the country are successfully offering consumers residential local service via resold Bell company service
- Smaller companies such as USN Communications and ITC DeltaCom are successfully offering business cutomers local service via resold Bell company service
- Companies such as Intermedia, McLeod USA and ICG Communications are offering local service over their own facilities, generating hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue and triple-digit annual percentage growth

These smaller companies don't have the tens of thousands of employees that the big long distance giants do. They don't have billions of investment dollars. But they are competing.

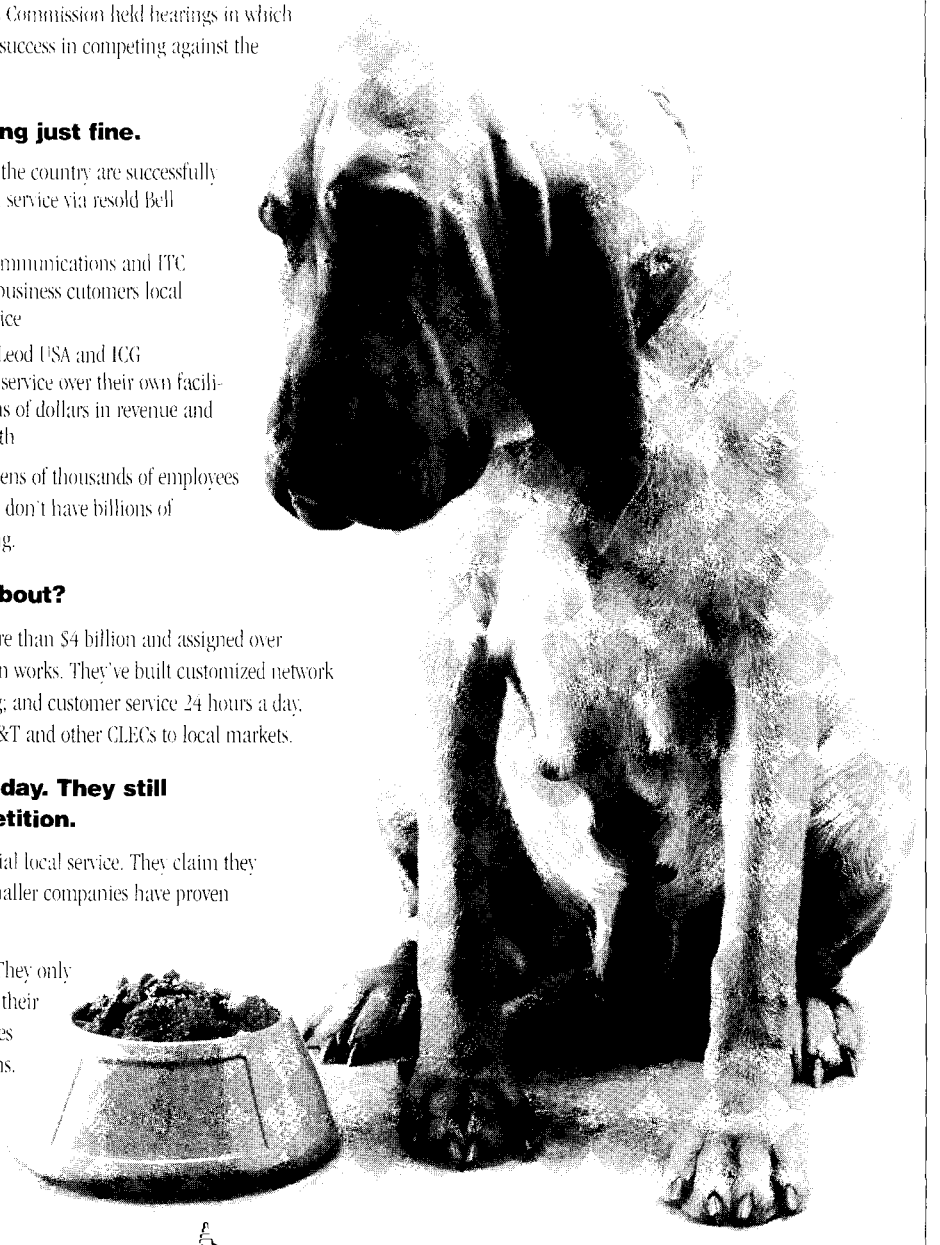
So what's all the howling about?

Local phone companies have devoted more than $4 billion and assigned over 8,000 employees to make sure competition works. They've built customized network elements; offered on-site network training; and customer service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, all to connect MCI and AT&T and other CLECs to local markets.

The big dogs lie around all day. They still have no appetite for competition.

MCI and AT&T have given up on residential local service. They claim they can't gain access to local markets, but smaller companies have proven them wrong.

MCI and AT&T are stalling competition. They only want competition on their own terms, on their own timetable. That's what their executives conceded during recent merger discussions. You know those big dogs. They lie around all day.



We'll connect all Americans if we're allowed to compete.

UNITED STATES TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION

America's Local Phone Companies • www.callthemonit

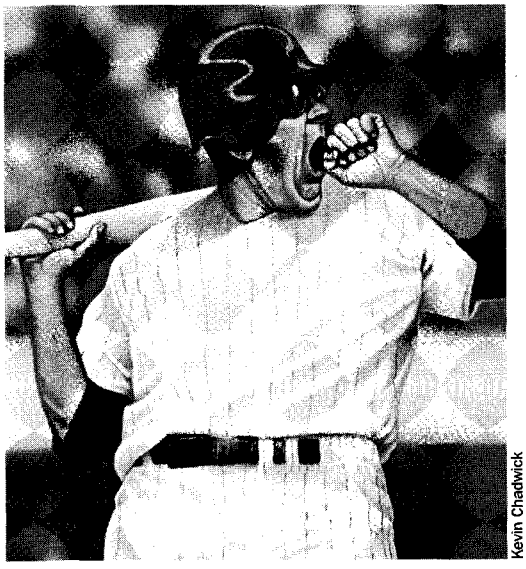
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A DHUMB IDEA AT 25

The Failure of the Designated-Hitter Experiment

By Christopher Caldwell

On a blistering cold Boston afternoon twenty-five years ago this week, I was a witness to history for the first time in my 10-year-old life. I sat in a first-base box at Fenway Park and watched Ron Blomberg of the New York Yankees come to bat as the first designated hitter in major-league history. The American League's owners had decided the previous winter that pitchers would no longer hit. Instead, they'd be replaced by a "designated pinch hitter"—the name was later shortened—who would not field. It was the league's first big rule change in 70 years. Not since the AL decided to count foul balls as strikes in 1903 had the league jerked the game around so fundamentally.



Kevin Chadwick

I hated it. I liked watching pitchers hit, even if my first baseball memories were of Ray Culp and Gary Waslewski and Juan Pizarro flailing away at fastballs in the dirt. And it seemed the designated hitter violated some very important principles, even if I couldn't then specify what they were. Now I can. The DH is practically the archetype of meddlesome, liberal, tradition-despising micromanagerial busybodiness. After a quarter century of watching baseball, and with the designated hitter used in every baseball league in the world except the National, I see no reason to revise my opinion. It's an abomination. If I still love American League baseball, it's in the way a patriot can still love a country that has been disgraced before history.

I'm not alone. Many people have raised their voices against the DH in the course of this bleak quarter-century. The writer Daniel Okrent thinks the 1973 reforms were "an occurrence of such immense proportion, of such stunningly negative effect, that the year can be remembered for nothing else." Sportswriter Red Smith thought the DH "a loathsome ploy." Manager Sparky Anderson says, "It stinks."

The DH rule was a radical and permanent solution to what in retrospect were two short-term problems. First, baseball had just gone through several years of weak hitting. The pitcher's mound was too high, and better-conditioned hurlers overwhelmed the batters. Relief pitching was being used more scientifically, and baseball gloves were of much higher quality (a seemingly trivial development with monumental implications). In 1966, only two American leaguers hit over .300. In 1967, only four did, and in 1968, only one did (Carl Yastrzemski, at .301). This situation was common to both leagues, but it was masked statistically in the National League by new Astroturf surfaces, which produced cheap hits.

The second problem: Baseball was undergoing an attendance crisis, due partly to competition from other sports (notably football) and partly to the fading of the stars of the 1960s. In 1972, only three American League teams drew more than a million fans. It was thought the DH would kill both these birds—garnering more hits and more fans—with one stone.

There would be drawbacks to the DH: First, it would cut down on managerial strategy, much of which involved deciding whether to remove a good pitcher from the game or to pinch hit for him. According to Red Sox pitcher Bill Lee, himself an excellent hitter, the DH "relieves the manager of all responsibility except to post the lineup card and make sure everybody gets to the airport on time." And it would mess

Christopher Caldwell is senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

up the statistics that had served as the game's conscience since the turn of the century.

What did we get in return? A bit more offense, but that was hardly the point. Privately, the owners figured that innovation for its own sake would draw people back to the parks. While the DH had first been proposed by NL president John Heydler in 1928, the modern rule is the brainchild of the late Oakland A's owner Charles O. Finley, author of a lot of other novelties, most of which have been consigned to the ridicule that the DH should share. Finley favored orange baseballs and walks that would be three balls instead of four. He initiated those Day-Glo double-knit uniforms that grew increasingly bizarre as the seventies wore on. Finley wanted not just a designated hitter but a "designated runner." In fact, he wanted two-platoon baseball. There was never any doubt in Finley's mind that he was a visionary, and he was the sport's great social engineer. As he himself put it, "They thought I was nuts, but after continuously harping, I finally woke them up." Like most of his ilk in that era—and ours—he was motivated at heart by loathing for that which he sought to reform. As San Francisco Giants broadcaster Jon Miller remembers, "Charley didn't really like baseball. He thought it was boring."

That is, the DH was a means of corralling sports fans who would *really* rather be watching football. That's not what the owners said publicly. Their public rationale for the DH had two points: First, it would add offense to the game—here the DH succeeded moderately, if at great cost. Second, it would extend the careers of some of baseball's big-name stars too old to play in the field—and here it was an absolute failure.

When the DH was passed, an extraordinarily high number of sluggers were ending their careers: Orlando Cepeda, Willie Mays, Willie McCovey. . . . Friends of mine said, "Just think: We could get to see Hank Aaron play." Well, we did. In 1976, I saw "the Hammer" (quotation marks were necessary by this point) drag his lame and bloated haunches up to the plate at Fenway Park as the designated hitter for the Milwaukee Brewers, to wave at the ball a few times. Aaron did little that year except complain about how badly baseball had treated him. At .229, he was outhit by Mike Hegan, Von Joshua, and all the Brewer defensive replacements. He hit a career low of 10 home runs and had more strikeouts than RBIs for the only time in his career.

DHs are in general the least interesting ballplayers on any club. They consistently hit below the league average, and some years, DH is the lowest-hitting position of all—below shortstop, even. The designated hitter isn't even really a position. In 1995, only five teams had DHs with enough at-bats to qualify for the AL batting title. On the other teams, the DH tends to be any guy who's too lame, exhausted, or incompetent to put into the regular lineup. Granted, there are some good ones: Edgar Martinez hit .356 in 1995, and Minnesota's Paul Molitor is a future Hall of Famer. But both are capable of playing infield positions, and both are exceptions. Talk about a bait-and-switch: In general, the DH is either an exercise in sports necrophilia (as in the case of Aaron) or a dumping ground for people who don't belong in the big leagues in the first place. On Opening Day this year, the American League's DHs went a piddling 7-for-35 and were outhit by the National League's pitchers, who were 6-for-27.

The typical DH is more likely some stiff on the order of Juan Samuel, Bob Hamelin, Carlos Delgado, and Ron Kittle. Don Baylor, with a career average of .260, is hardly one of the game's giants. Yet he's routinely talked about as the greatest DH of all, having in 1979 become the first at his position to win an MVP. Baylor went on to win the AL Outstanding Designated Hitter award in both 1985 and 1986, for batting, respectively, *.231* and *.238*. Hardly the stuff to elicit a collective, "Take me out to the ball game!"

Meanwhile, the warnings of the damage the DH would do to the game turned out to err on the side of optimism. Take strategy: Handling pitchers was not the only aspect of managerial strategy that disappeared from the AL game. So did the double-substitution, used to camouflage pitchers in the batting order, which brought a variety of players into the game. And the rule created a chain reaction of boredom. Since AL teams generally carried an extra hitter, there was a dramatic increase in "platooning," the brain-dead managerial practice of starting righthanded hitters against lefthanded pitchers, and vice versa. Achievements *have* been cheapened beyond anyone's wildest dread, so that a couple of half-players may even ride their DH-bloated statistics into the Hall of Fame. As noted above, Paul Molitor is a shoo-in when he retires, and even that great disappointment Jim Rice, who could barely scrape his way to 2,400 career hits, will make it eventually. And there were unintended consequences. There were more hit batsmen in the AL, since pitchers didn't have to come to the plate after brushing back opponents. And until they learned to work with the DH, managers were prone to overwork pitchers; Billy Martin of the A's ruined the arms of an entire pitching staff in the early 1980s.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The DH is a cheap and pointless gimmick that has left the game lousier than before it arrived. One of the first managers to recognize it as such, the Orioles' Earl Weaver, used to pencil in as DHs pitchers who were scheduled to start days later—and then pinch-hit for them on their first at-bat. Thus, Steve Stone was in the lineup as DH while celebrating Rosh Hashana in another city. Stone once DH'd while out of the *country* (in Toronto for his next start). And Tippy Martinez DH'd while attending a funeral. *Real* DHs have been scarcely less ridiculous. George Brett would work on his golf swing between at-bats. John Lowenstein, explaining how he kept alert, used to say, "I flush the john between innings to keep my wrists strong." You can see how this got to me at age 10: Kids used to dream about racing through the outfield to catch flies. What kind of kid dreams about flushing the toilet? Who could dream about being a DH?

What an insult that people are trying to pass off this collection of scrubs as heroes. Listen to Reggie Jackson, for instance, that great self-promoting, .250-hitting pseudo-star of the 1970s—the quintessential DH—who is now a Yankees executive. Jackson defends the DH by saying, "We were reminded of what heroes mean to all of us when Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan returned to the NBA."

Yes, but Johnson and Jordan returned as *heroes*. DHs return as league-assisted wards. It's not only cheating—it's aesthetically wrong. It wrecks the dialectic between individual achievement and teamwork that is one of the clockwork beauties of baseball. Why should, say, Harold Baines get to take his whacks without having to expose himself to windblown flies? It doesn't matter if he gets a few clutch hits: A gold medal in the Special Olympics is not Olympic gold.

This is the principle that explains why every Little League team has the DH—even to the detriment of the better all-around players. In a world where parents constitute a dozen outraged interest groups, it allows a coach to play an extra player and be more "fair."

Does this remind you of anything? It's affirmative action.

"The NL, which fancies itself too highfalutinly traditionalist for the DH," says George Will, "plays an awful lot of pinball 'baseball' on plastic rugs spread on concrete in cavernous antiseptic new stadiums in Houston, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Montreal and St. Louis." This is not an argument, of course; it's like the Third Reich calling the Red Army a human-rights violator.

But Will has a point. As time passes, it gets harder and harder to argue against the DH on the strongest grounds, those of tradition, particularly as tradition is flouted by expansion and night World Series games and artificial turf and inter-league play. The AL has now gone through a quarter of its history with the DH. The DH is neither popular nor unpopular; AL fans tend to favor it and NL fans tend not to, much as Americans like baseball and Englishmen like cricket. As veteran sportswriter Leonard Koppett put it, "It's the biggest nothing I ever heard of in my life." Over the last 25 years, Koppett says, the AL has a batting average about .007 higher than that of the National League. The AL hits more home runs and the NL has more sacrifices. People have made their peace with it.

But that's the problem. The corruption the rule engenders in fans is the most appalling aspect of it. Paul Woody writes in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, "One day, perhaps because of the DH rule, we might see Tony Gwynn go after his 3,000th hit and [a] .400 season or Ken Griffey Jr. track down Hank Aaron's home run record. Those are not such bad things. Who doesn't want to see history in the making?" But they *are* bad things, if you eclipse a true achievement with a cheap and shoddy one. Fans like Woody don't like baseball. They like *excitement*, which they define as watching people run around. And baseball simply cannot compete with basketball and football in the people-running-around department.

"People come to see players produce runs," says Wade Boggs. It is not peripheral to our argument that Boggs is one of the stupidest men ever to play baseball. The game as Boggs understands it is basically the moronball you see on the evening-highlight films. If a game ends 6-5 on a suicide squeeze in the 17th inning, you'll still see only the home runs that were hit in the top of the third. Why? Because *Home Runs = Excitement*. Look at the ad campaign Major League Baseball has been running for the last two seasons, with the succession of home-plate collisions and speed guns and dust flying off a smashed ball. "I love this game," says a man's voice at the end of every commercial. Yes—unfortunately, the game he loves is basketball.

The DH appears here to stay. As Seymour Siwoff of the Elias Sports Bureau says, "It's become part of working conditions." Even if most DHs stink, their seniority makes their average salaries the second-highest in the game. At $3.46 million per annum, they're just behind first basemen ($3.57 million), at 250 percent of the average big-league paycheck. Owners have pleaded with the players' union to let them scrap the DH and offered to add a 26th player to all rosters as recompense. The union isn't budging.

Does this remind you of anything? It's featherbedding.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The union is taking the Clintonesque position that it's not being self-serving, only doing the business the American people sent it here to do. As Donald Fehr, executive director of the union, says, "I don't know why we'd do something that would take Eddie Murray and Paul Molitor and Chili Davis out of the game while they can still hit."

Oh, no! Not Chili Davis!

At the end of March, baseball's owners sent players a letter of intent that would allow them to abolish the DH rule after the 1998 season. (They must give the union a year's notice for any rules change.) Players were outraged at the gesture, but that's all it was—a gesture. Owners are about as likely to get real baseball back as Republicans are to abolish the Education Department.

Right now, owners won't even speak publicly about getting rid of it, even if sentiment (or money) is strongly behind scrapping the thing. In a recent poll of American League clubs, nine voted publicly in favor of keeping the rule (although three of these indicated they'd switch sides if the movement gained enough momentum). The five that wanted to scrap it either abstained or voted undecided. Why won't the owners talk? "It's such a powerful issue," says one statistician, "that I don't think anyone can talk about it. Because of its labor consequences."

Does this remind you of anything? It's political correctness.

All of us sitting there in Fenway a quarter century ago were being rolled over by history. The DH was part of the *Zeitgeist*. The Philadelphia plan launching affirmative action had just been promulgated by President Nixon in an executive order. Watergate hearings were just getting underway.

A year later, in the city surrounding Fenway park, school busing would be imposed by court order and enforced with armored cars and thousands of troops, wrecking ethnic neighborhoods full of baseball fans. Pretty much everything bad about America, and pretty much every element in the decline of Western civilization, can be linked in some way to the designated hitter.

Baseball teaches many lessons. As Jacques Barzun famously noted, "Whoever would understand the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball." Since 1973, the designated hitter has helped teach us another lesson: that a bad idea, no matter how empty its rationale, no matter how venal and self-serving its proponents, can go on forever and ever. ♦

The Decline of Baseball Civilization

By Charles Krauthammer

Tom Boswell, sportswriter and baseball fan extraordinaire, once wrote a book called *Why Time Begins on Opening Day*. And so it does. Life begins anew not with the first robin or the vernal equinox, but with the first pitch—this year thrown out charmingly at Camden Yards by a former pigtail league phenom, now Health and Welfare honcho, Donna Shalala.

But time begins on Opening Day for fewer and fewer people. Those whose life rhythms are attuned to baseball's—like *Washington Post* book critic Jonathan Yardley, whose term for the months between the last out of the World Series and the first pitch of Opening Day is simply "the void"—are dwindling. We are an aging cohort. Like Russian Communists, we'll all be gone in another decade or two, and who will carry on after us?

The problem is not just declining attendance or TV ratings. Attendance is down 11 percent from the '94 strike year, but it is slowly recovering, and will tick up again when new stadiums open soon in Milwaukee, Seattle, Detroit, Houston, and San Francisco.

And yes, the ratings drop is quite stark. The '97 All-Star game was the lowest-rated All-Star game ever broadcast, and the June 21 Fox Game of the Week drew fewer viewers than the competing women's (!) basketball game. Nonetheless, low ratings can be in

Contributing editor Charles Krauthammer is a former good-field, no-hit shortstop at Herzliah high school in Montreal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

part attributed to the ratings decline for all sporting events, as viewership is spread to cable, video rentals, and movies-on-demand.

No, the real problem with baseball is the decline in interest. Nobody talks about it. At the water cooler, in bars, on sports-talk radio, the chat is about the NFL draft, NBA rookies, and the NCAA finals. The "hot stove league" is a concept so hoary that most youngsters don't even know what it is, or was. (Ans.: Baseball talk during winter months.)

The lack of interest is reflected in the newspaper coverage. The *New York Times* used to plaster Opening Day coverage all over its Sunday sports section. This year, the top half of the page was devoted to the women's college basketball finals. Fifty years ago, some big-city papers would run the line score of the home team's game on the front page. Today you need a microscope and a road map to find baseball box scores.

How little do people talk and care about baseball? Consider this: Ever heard of a game in which the home team was down by six runs with two outs, two strikes, in the bottom of the ninth, and came back to win? Such an epochal comeback—statistics on this type are not kept, but in 40 years of following baseball I've never heard of a more improbable comeback—is the stuff of legend. Had it happened in, say, Casey Stengel's day, it would by now be celebrated in song. Well, it happened last year, on September 13. Shea stadium, Mets vs. Montreal. The local papers carried the story, but practically no one else. I read about it on the inside pages of the *Washington Post* sports section, where it earned a five-line paragraph. I saw nothing more about it. I'll bet not a single baseball fan you know has even heard about that game.

This neglect by the media is nothing more than a reflection of popular taste. Fifty years ago, the three top sports in America were baseball, boxing, and horse racing. Horse racing has been displaced by legalized gambling and casinos. Boxing has descended to the point where the average person can't name the heavyweight champ. And baseball is living on its memories. In fact, the NBC Game of the Week for many years used to begin with the slogan, "The Tradition is Here, the Memories are Waiting." The game had not yet begun and it was already slotted for memory. Adrift in the age of TV, overtaken by football and basketball, baseball lives in, and off, nostalgia.

Sports Illustrated promotes subscriptions by offering free videos. Its basketball video features Michael Jordan. Its football video features Super Bowl highlights. The baseball video offers film of the game's golden years with grainy black and white footage going all the way back to Babe Ruth. The marketers know: It has become a game of the past.

II

Why? The most obvious and important reason is, of course, television. If you listen to a football or basketball game on radio, you really don't know what is happening. There is too much going on. Baseball, with its discrete and isolated action, with its long pauses for reflection and reverie, is the quintessential radio sport.

Its decline begins with television. It simply cannot compete on screen with the spectacles of basketball and football. These are fast, clock-driven games, perfectly attuned to the quick-cut world of video. Perhaps even more important is the size and speed of the ball. In basketball and football, it is large and easily visible. It also travels at speeds that the human eye can apprehend on a small screen. Not so in baseball. Baseball is 90 percent pitching (the other half is hitting, as Yogi Berra might say), and pitching is notoriously hard to follow.

Even harder to follow is the ball coming off the bat. Mark McGwire hit a grand slam on Opening Day last Tuesday. How does the biggest play of that game appear on screen? A large man swings a bat. Then cut to a sea of fans in left field looking upward for a speck that is entirely invisible to the TV viewer. (Hockey suffers from the same problem: small puck, high speeds, low ratings.)

But that can't be the whole explanation. After all, we have been in the television age for forty years, and baseball's decline, while noticeable, was not precipitous until the last few years. Indeed, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it enjoyed something of a revival, with high attendance, fan interest, and renewed cultural vogue (*Bull Durham*, *Field of Dreams*, books by Roger Angell and George Will, Ken Burns's PBS documentary, etc.).

Then came the '94 strike. It was a seminal event. Not just because it killed the season, disrupted the rhythms, and showed how easy it is to live without baseball. But because it showed fans that the owners and players cared so much less about the game—its statistics, its records, even the World Series—than they did. It mocked the fan. After all, it is ridiculous enough to care deeply whether some total stranger making $8 million a year hits 61 homers or bats .400. It is even more ridiculous when you care about it more than the player does.

Beyond the shock of the strike is the inexorable erosion that lies in baseball's demographics. The fans

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are getting older. It is old fogies like me who still care about the game. Fewer kids watch it. Fewer still play it. What was the decisive demographic of the '96 presidential election? Soccer moms. A generation ago, soccer moms were to be found in Padua, not Peoria.

Part of this erosion, like most of baseball's woes, is self-inflicted. Baseball has made it increasingly hard for kids to establish a bond with the game. Generally this association happens in two ways. One is to watch the great players and retain indelible memories of magic moments. The barons of baseball have done their best to make this physically impossible. Kids today have no memories of dramatic baseball events because most of these events happen far past their bedtimes. The NFL puts its Super Bowl on at 6 P.M. so that even in the East it is over by early evening. That's about when World Series games are getting started.

How many people actually saw the most dramatic baseball moment of the last 25 years, Carlton Fisk's home run that won in the sixth game of the 1975 World Series, the one where he bounces up and down like a rabbit and coaxes the ball to stay fair? He hit it at 12:34 A.M. Everybody has seen it on the highlights and promotional films. But who saw it live?

Last year's thrilling extra-inning seventh game of the World Series ended after midnight. Baseball is a slow uncoiling game. Its tension rises ever so subtly. Its great dramatic moments inevitably occur late. For the last generation, ever since baseball went to night ball for the showcase All-Star and Series games, the drama has occurred past any normal person's, let alone child's, bedtime.

III

The other way kids bond with teams is to follow them day to day, year to year. They establish a connection with a great player or star who carries the identity of the team (and the game) with him into the child's consciousness. This is the role of a Michael Jordan or a John Elway (who, tellingly, was drafted both by the Baltimore Colts and the New York Yankees, and chose the sport of the future over the sport of the past). It is still the role of a Cal Ripken, and helps to account for the fact that the Baltimore Orioles are one of the few healthy franchises in baseball and one of the only teams that consistently sells out its stadium.

But Ripken, a star who has played with the same team for all 17 years of his career, is the rare exception. The great players now change cities and uniforms with carpetbagging alacrity and barely a look back. Think of players who are not just stars but superstars: Orel Hershiser, Wade Boggs, Paul Molitor, Jose Canseco. Does even a real fan know who they play for today? (Ans.: San Francisco, Tampa, Minnesota, Toronto.)

Payroll pressures in baseball's widely unregulated market—basketball and football have salary caps, baseball has total financial anarchy—have made it almost impossible for the small-market teams to keep big stars. Albert Belle of the big-market Chicago White Sox makes more than the entire 25-man roster of the Montreal Expos *combined*. Result? The game's stars are abruptly bought and sold in response not to

A rhapsody of beauty and romance; the most exquisite jewelry ever...

Fresh-Water Pearl Necklace/Bracelet Set incredibly only $99*

******But read this ad for an even better deal!*

From the fresh-water lagoons off the South China Sea come these perfect and unblemished 4-mm. pearls. Skilled artisans have strung them—all 893 of them—together with beads of black onyx, angel-skin coral, and 18-kt. gold-plated balls on five twisted strands, to form this gorgeous 26-inch opera-length necklace. And there is a "secret": You can separate the necklace into two parts—an 18-inch evening-wear necklace and an 8-inch matching bracelet—a stunning combination.

We have exclusive manufacturing arrangements with the accomplished people who harvest these pearls and hand-assemble this beautiful jewelry; we can therefore bring you this exquisite Set at the incredible price of only $99. But we have an even better deal: **Buy two Sets for $198 and we'll send you a third Set, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!** Do something wonderful for yourself or for someone you love: Order the *Fresh-Water Pearl Necklace/Bracelet Set* today!

You may order by toll-free phone, by mail, or by fax and pay by check or Visa/MasterCard. Please give order **#1063D764**. We need daytime phone # for all orders. Add $4.95 standard shipping/insurance charge (plus sales tax for California delivery). You have 30-day refund and one-year warranty. We do not refund shipping charges.

since 1967 **haverhills®**
185 Berry St., San Francisco, CA 94107

✆ Order by toll-free phone: (800) 797-7367 or by fax: (415) 546-7808 ✆

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

teams' competitive needs but to their financial needs.

Just last week, on the day before Opening Day, the impecunious Cincinnati Reds traded away their top pitcher for a young, cheap prospect. They sent him to Cleveland, a team rolling in money because of the success of its stadium. Said Reds manager, Jack McKeon, "This is the first time in my career as a major league manager that I've lost my Opening Day pitcher."

Cleveland, like the rich Yankees and Orioles and Braves, has been collecting all-stars with cash, practically assuring entry into the playoffs. Last year, the four remaining teams playing for the American and National League pennants ranked in the top five in total payroll. (The other big-wallet team, the New York Yankees, made the playoffs, too, but lost in the first round.) Meanwhile, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, Kansas City, and Montreal have to sell any player who achieves stardom just to keep from going broke.

Baseball players used to change teams through trades. But never did the major players, the anchors of the teams, the ones the kids idolized, change teams so often and so wildly. This buying and selling of talent breaks all ties to the local fans. It was most dramatically, almost comically illustrated by the Florida Marlins last year. An expansion team hungry for success, it spent $89 million to buy up the best free agents on the planet. Sure enough, it won itself a World Series. Then the owner, Blockbuster Video founder H. Wayne Huizenga, found that attendance was still down and the Marlins were hemorrhaging money, losing $4 million in 1997 and $30 million over the five-year history of the team. Solution? Sell off all the stars he had just bought. On Opening Day this year, half the players on the World Series squad were gone. The team is unrecognizable.

It's one thing to buy the World Series. It's another to rent it for a year.

In the old days, the wanton, financially driven dismantling of great teams was not unheard of, but it was certainly rare and vigorously discouraged by the force of public opinion and by decree of the commissioner. In Boston, Harry Frazee is still reviled 80 years after selling Babe Ruth to the Yankees to finance his Broadway production of *No No Nanette*. Connie Mack is notorious for having twice—in 1914 and in 1933—sold off the stars of his pennant-winning teams (including Hall of Famer Al Simmons) to keep his shoestring Philadelphia Athletics operation going.

Charley Finley, the owner of the Oakland A's in the early '70s, was not just eccentric—he had a mule for a mascot and once installed a mechanical rabbit that popped out of the ground near home plate with balls for the umpire—but stingy. In June 1976, he tried to sell two of his star players to the rich Red Sox and Yankees for cash. The commissioner stopped the trade cold "in the best interest of baseball." But there is no commissioner now, no one to stop such fan-betraying deals, no one to look after the best interests of baseball.

IV

Is baseball reaching the end of the road? A few more self-inflicted wounds and it may truly be remembered as a game of the 20th century: R.I.P. Major League Baseball, 1901-1999. The owners are, for example, still not aware how they squandered one of the great gifts baseball was ever handed, Michael Jordan. Jordan, the biggest sports star in the world, decided five years ago that instead of playing in the NBA finals, he would rather ride the buses and play AA baseball for the Birmingham Barons. At a time when baseball was losing its appeal, particularly among kids, to the glamour of football and basketball, Jordan's tribute to the game offered baseball an unexpected windfall of prestige.

Jordan's methodical and almost painful retraining as a baseball player might even have given him a shot at the major leagues, an event that would have electrified the sports world. Instead, he found himself in the spring of '95, as the baseball owners were about to bring on replacement minor league players to break the players' strike, caught in a bitter labor dispute. Rather than become a strikebreaker, he quit. He then returned his star power to basketball, which now thrives as never before.

Another attempt by the owners at self-inflicted mayhem failed mercifully last year. The acting commissioner, Bud Selig, proposed abolishing the American and National Leagues—brand names with loyalties going back a hundred years—and realigning the major league teams on a regional basis. At the last minute, this loony proposal was voted down. It will come up again, however. One must never underestimate the owners' capacity to injure the game.

Assuming, however, that nothing egregious of this sort happens in the near future, baseball will hobble along, enjoying a quiet senescence. Indeed, it will probably enjoy a bump in popularity in two or three years. That is when new stadiums will be completed in some of the small markets, and there will be a predictable increase in excitement and attendance as fans turn out for the park, if only secondarily for the game.

For a glimpse of the future, consider the Arizona Diamondbacks, the expansion team that just joined the National League. Its new stadium in Phoenix fea-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tures a swimming pool in right-center field from which you can watch the game submerged. We've come a long way from Ebbetts Field.

At some stadiums you can now watch games while dining in a restaurant. Or, if you prefer, from the window of your hotel room—built into the outfield wall of the Skydome in Toronto. This led some years ago to the arrest of two patrons who left their curtains open while making whoopee in front of 50,000 fans who got to see more than just a baseball game.

Indeed, "more than just a baseball game" is what the owners are counting on to attract customers and save the sport. This dining and sleeping and soaking while watching baseball is part of what is called "the malling of baseball." The attraction becomes not so much the game as the experience of the stadium—the amenities, the novelty shops, the batting cages, the sports museums, the outfield jacuzzi.

Purists frown on this, but the purists had better shape up. They are a dying breed. If the malls that masquerade as stadiums can keep the game going for another 20 years, that will be fine with me. I'll bathe at home, thank you, but at least there will be a game to go to. ♦

In the Court of Sultan Bill

By James W. Ceaser

In the complex relationship between sex and politics that has preoccupied Americans for the past three months, many of those seeking to condemn the president have relied on some version of the feminist principle that "the personal is political," while those seeking to excuse or exonerate him have rallied to the libertarian idea that "the personal is personal." But to see the issue solely in these terms misses the strikingly novel and dangerous turn that American political life is taking: What the Clinton White House is actually asserting is the despotic principle that "the political is personal."

The personal is political, a cryptic phrase casually introduced by feminist theorists some twenty years ago, became one of the major slogans of the modern women's movement. It is shorthand for the feminist attack on the notion that relations between the sexes—in dating, in marriage, and on the job—take place in a private, non-political realm. The reality, feminists insist, is that such matters involve fundamental struggles of power and influence, which make them intensely political. And because they are political, they are legitimately subject to greater public control, be it by expanded definitions of sexual harassment, codes of sexual conduct for business corporations and universities, or censure of objectionable behavior by vigilant organs of opinion.

Long before the advent of modern feminist theory, of course, American society had (and still has) a system of public regulation of private life designed to defend traditional morality, especially as it relates to protecting marriage and the family. Under this system, there is today a modest network of laws that encourages marriage and restricts pornography and lewd behavior, and a body of religious teachings and customary beliefs that disapproves of adultery and condemns boorish behavior by men against women. Clearly, feminist proponents of the principle that the personal is political did not have this system in mind—except as a target. Traditional morality, they argue, is an amalgam of Christian, chivalric, and Victorian values that serves merely as a polite disguise for male dominance. Yet despite the radical disagreements between feminists and traditionalists, the two have sometimes managed to work together where their principles coincide, as in opposition to pornography, which both offends decency and demeans women. Such was the uneasy coalition many perhaps expected to develop in the current White House scandal, with Gary Bauer and Gloria Steinem walking, if not exactly arm in arm, then at any rate side by side, to defend their respective causes.

James W. Ceaser is professor of government and foreign affairs at the University of Virginia and the author of Reconstructing America *(Yale).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The libertarian idea—*the personal is personal*—holds that consensual sexual relations are private matters that should be beyond the reach of law or custom. A prudential version of this principle, consistent with the older morality, allows traditional standards to be publicly stated, but argues that it is wisest to steer clear of discussions of such matters, except perhaps in the most flagrant cases. Otherwise, there is a risk of sliding into moralistic crusades. But it is not the mild and almost apologetic version of this principle, but the strong and positive one, that has had the greatest influence on American life. Known among the mass of middle-aged college graduates as the morality of sexual liberation, this variant moves beyond asserting a zone or right of privacy in all sexual relations to proclaiming that consensual sexual relations of any kind, where openly announced, deserve to be accepted, if not celebrated. *The personal is personal* means here that the personal is non-censurable. The movement for sexual liberation was a crusade to end repression of all kinds and to make the world safe for eroticism. "Make love not war"—a cause to which the young Bill Clinton was devoutly and passionately committed—was not just a statement of opposition to the Vietnam war, but a clarion call to fashion a new kind of society.

THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE POLITICAL IS PERSONAL LEADS TO THE FORMATION OF A STATE WITHIN A STATE—DEVOTED TO SERVING THE LEADER'S PRIVATE PARTS.

Over the past three decades, the cause of sexual liberation has lost much of its revolutionary ardor, having been moderated by the ravages of middle age and the fear of sexually transmitted diseases. It has also been curbed by the strain of feminism which contended that liberation often allowed men, especially powerful men, to practice openly their contempt for women. Now that many feminists have for tactical reasons thrown their support to Bill Clinton and become the chief public defenders of the principle that the personal is personal, this last element of restraint has been removed. The cause of sexual liberation, devoid of any political content, has been reborn. Within sophisticated circles it is remarkable now how many—men and women alike—don't just tolerate but applaud the president's erotic exploits. But the idea that the personal is personal has wider support even than this. Many defenders of traditional morality have found recourse to this seemingly neutral principle in their desire to block the excesses and zealotry of the feminist-inspired program. Just as many conservatives have gravitated to a doctrine of pure free speech and expression in order to try to escape the campaigns for political correctness, so some traditionalists have moved to embrace the absolute principle that the personal is personal in order to combat some of the new sexual codes.

The widespread support of the American populace for the idea that the personal is personal has proven a real surprise to most political observers, who after all live in a hothouse of pressure from feminists and traditionalists for more social regulation. Defenders of President Clinton, who in the dark days of January were at a loss on how to mount a positive case, stumbled upon this principle as their Maginot line. The president's team has concluded that if his difficulties can be framed as a matter of "personal" morality, he can escape adverse judgment not only for his sexual misadventures but also for publicly lying about them or even committing perjury to cover them up. If *the personal is personal* is a deeply supported principle, then—or so the thinking goes—people may excuse all reasonable actions designed to defend it.

The problem for the White House is how to maintain the fiction that Bill Clinton's personal behavior is the issue at stake. For the president himself has already collapsed the distinction between the public and private realms. He has made his own top staff, government employees all, complicit in the defense of his personal pleasures. And he has asserted executive privilege to keep secret the degree of that complicity— which is equally an assertion of the despotic principle, *the political is personal.*

This principle erases the distinction between the public and sexual realms by allowing the power and prerogatives of public office to be employed to satisfy the public official's private desires. Under this principle, what takes place in the political realm—in the Oval Office or in the deliberations between a president and his counselors—may legitimately promote entirely personal ends. The full array of public instruments and resources may be put in the service of this purpose, from using political spaces for private acts, to employing public officials to procure sexual partners, to granting or denying public jobs to induce sexual favors and maintain silences, to calling on a panoply of communications experts and legal counselors to protect these exchanges. These public instruments are supplemented by a nominally private network—but one available obviously only to someone enjoying the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prestige of high public office—that includes high-powered private lawyers and "friends" with connections to major private corporations. Fully developed, the principle that the political is personal leads to the formation of a state within a state—an entire apparatus devoted to serving the leader's private parts.

Systems of rule based on this principle are certainly not new. *The political is personal* was the governing idea of the Oriental despotisms that supported large harems, as Montesquieu illustrated in his *Persian Letters*. In the Mogul and Ottoman Empires, the emperors and sultans would stash away in their seraglios anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand women to service their wants. Maintaining the harem posed a formidable administrative challenge that occupied much of the energy of the state. Above all else, of course, was the problem of assuring a constant replenishment of young and nubile females, who were to be plucked at a time when, in the verse of one fourteenth-century Arab poet, "their breasts still hang like pomegranates." When the Mogul Akbar the Great (1542-1605) began to build his harem, the families of the proud nobles, solicitous still of defending their own, resisted giving up their daughters, whom Akbar then had to take by force. But with time the mores of society adapted, and far from expressing indignation, parents traded on their connections to bring their daughters to the sultan's attention and help them secure entry to the harem.

Sean Delonas

Procuring the maidens also posed the age-old difficulty of how to guard the guardians. Here, no doubt, the technical superiority of ancient methods over modern ones is most apparent. In the Paula Jones lawsuit, there was sworn testimony that, as governor, Bill Clinton sent state troopers to solicit women for him. This charge raised the ire of the president's lawyer, Bob Bennett, who vowed to prove that these troopers "hustled for themselves on a day to day basis." Understanding how complications of this sort might develop, the sultans created a special caste of administrators—the eunuchs—who were deemed uniquely qualified to exercise their responsibilities. The eunuchs were also assigned the difficult task of managing the harem, trying—like their White House counterparts—to forestall eruptions and to deal with scandals. To help in managing the harem, the sultans turned as well to the older women (sometimes wives), who either knew enough or had acquired enough connections in the court to virtually demand a share of power. Through byzantine alliances and intrigues with the eunuchs, these women during certain periods emerged as the chief power in the state, with the sultans being relegated to figurehead status.

The principle that the political is personal, while clearly the modus operandi in Washington today, has yet to be openly defended. But it is making steady headway in the public mind, largely because it is being conflated by those defending the president with the widely accepted principle that the personal is personal. There may in fact be a moral connection between the two views, for if nothing is really censurable in private life then why shouldn't political power be used for private ends?

In this sense, it is no surprise that the liberationist ideas of the sixties should underlie the tyrannic practices of today. Still, there remains a world of difference in constitutional form between these principles. To think that the current crisis fits under the rubric of "personal" behavior is therefore not just a casual ruse, but a fatal error. What is really at stake is a choice of political regimes. We can either opt to keep a republic or ratify the reign of Sultan Bill. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You deserve a factual look at...

Incitement to Violence

Do the Palestinians Live up to Their Oslo Commitments?

In the so-called "Oslo Agreement", often called the "peace process", Israel undertook unilaterally to make valuable concessions to the Palestinians, concessions that would eventually enable them to form an autonomous entity and to be masters of their own destiny. Never in the recorded history of mankind has any state made such concessions to one of its resident minorities. Israel requested and was solemnly promised very little in return—primarily that the Palestinians would abstain from violence and from incitement to violence.

What are the facts?

The reality, regrettably, has not at all lived up to the agreement and to the promises made. While Arafat and other Palestinian leaders proclaim their peaceful intentions in English before Western audiences, they are brutally frank when they address their own people in Arabic and away from Western newspeople and television cameras. There is constant incitement to violence and frank declaration of the ultimate goal—firmly embedded in the never rescinded PLO Covenant—namely the destruction of the State of Israel and its replacement by "Palestine," an Arab state.

The statements that follow were made by Palestinian leaders within the last twelve months. They are representative of many others in the same vein.

> "Peace will not come...until the Palestinians and the Arab nations commit themselves to full acceptance of Israel and are willing to live with it in peace."

PA Chairman Yasser Arafat ***(Palestinian Television, August 9, 1997):*** *"We must confront them, we must confront them. We must confront them in every sense of the word."*

Yasser Arafat ***(Palestinian Television, August 6, 1997):*** *"...let us commit ourselves before Allah and the Palestinian people that we shall lead the coming battle as we have led previous battles. An oath is an oath and a promise is a promise. The whole world stands by us, while they are alone. They are afraid, but we are not. We cling to the oath and the promise. The Palestinian people is faithful to its oath, the one which we swore upon the first day when the initial shot was fired and the first of our martyrs fell...We are marching together with the blessing of Allah, my brothers, we are marching together to Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem."*

Kamel Hamid, head of Fatah (a faction of the PLO) ***(At a Rally, August 10, 1997):*** *"...all means are legitimate to uproot the despicable occupation."*

Sheikh Hamed Bitawi, chairman of the Palestine Religious Scholars Association ***(July 27, 1997):*** *"That which befell the infidel nations will also occur to the State of Israel. We are certain that Allah will destroy the State of Israel either through natural disasters, such as an earthquake, or at the hands of the Moslems, or both."*

PA Mufti Ikrama Sabri ***(In a sermon at Al-Aksa Mosque, July 11, 1997):*** *"Oh Allah, destroy America for she is ruled by Zionist Jews...Allah shall take revenge on behalf of his prophet against the colonialist settlers who are sons of monkeys and pigs..."*

PA Minister for Jerusalem Affairs Feisal Husseini ***(May 18, 1997):*** *"Israel is attempting to obstruct peace...The only option remaining for us will be an alternative option...war."*

Yasser Arafat ***(Addressing a crowd in Tulkarem, April 28, 1997):*** *"I now see the walls of Jerusalem, the mosques of Jerusalem, the churches of Jerusalem. My brothers! With blood and with spirit we will redeem you, Palestine!"*

Nabil Ramlawi ***(At a session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, Reported March 17, 1997):*** *"Israeli authorities...infected by injection 300 Palestinian children with the HIV virus during the years of the intifada."*

All of these actual verbatim quotations are only a minute fraction of the inflammatory statements with which Palestinian leaders whip up their followers to a frenzy of hatred and violence against Israel. It is totally against the letter and the spirit of the Oslo accord. But it is in line with all the other acts of defiance and non-compliance on the part of the Palestinians. For example, and most egregiously perhaps, that famous Covenant that unequivocally calls for the destruction of Israel has never been rescinded. Instead of combating terrorist activity, the Palestinian Authority (P.A.) continues to release well-known members of terrorist groups. Another blatant violation is the size and the weaponry of the so-called P.A. police force, which was fixed by Oslo at a maximum of 24,000, but which is now estimated at over 50,000 members, many of them former terrorists and equipped with smuggled advanced military weapons. It is essentially an army in waiting. How do people expect Israel to bring further "sacrifices for peace" to appease these fanatics and why, in the face of daily evidence of Palestinian intransigence and murderous hatred, should Israel even consider turning over vital strategic assets to those who are openly committed to its destruction? Peace will not come to this part of the world until the Palestinians and the Arab nations commit themselves to full acceptance of Israel and are willing to live with it in peace. And that day seems to be a long way off.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic about the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501(c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

Yes, I want to help the publication of these ads and in clarifying the situation in the Middle East. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of
$_____ /60

❑ My contribution is in the amount of $100 or more. Please send me your videotape on three important aspects of Israel's strategic situation, fiery speeches by Yasser Arafat, and some memorable moments with Louis Farrakhan.

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State ____ Zip _____

Mail to : FLAME, P.O. Box 590359, San Francisco, CA 94159

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRADING DOWN

Pat Buchanan's History of America

By David Frum

In his newspaper columns and on the campaign trail, Pat Buchanan has bitterly attacked the overpowering consensus among political elites in favor of free trade. His latest book, *The Great Betrayal: How American Sovereignty and Social Justice Are Sacrificed to Gods of the Global Economy*, unwittingly demonstrates why that consensus has held so long: The best case for protectionism that one of America's most gifted polemicists can offer is as feeble as any BMW dealer could wish.

The Great Betrayal is crammed with bullet lists of statistics and graphs that swoop alarmingly up or depressingly down in proof of the book's thesis. But examination quickly reveals how carelessly they have been used. Buchanan observes, for example: "Since 1966, the share of American men with jobs has fallen from 85.4 percent to 76.8 percent. Idle men end up in trouble, often in prison." The culprit, he claims, is free trade.

Buchanan is in fact correct that American men are less attached to the labor force than they were thirty years ago. But the single most important reason for that is the aging of the population and the greater generosity of Social Security. Back in 1966, only 8 percent of adult American males were older than sixty-five, and more than 27 percent of them still worked. Today, nearly 11 percent of adult American males are over sixty-five, and only 17 percent of them work. There has been a slight increase in idleness among working-age men, but the main cause is the welfare state: Some two million American men now draw disability pensions from the Supplemental Security Income program—which did not exist in 1966.

There are dozens of such misuses of statistics in *The Great Betrayal*. Buchanan declares, for example, that "In the first six years of the 1990s, the median family income fell 6 percent. During the Depression-era 1930s, it rose 17 percent." Apparently aware of the eyebrow-raising nature of this claim, Buchanan footnotes it—to a page in a book that makes no reference to the 1930s at all. That's not surprising: The federal government only began collecting family-income data after World War II, and if family income had risen by 17 percent in the 1930s, the decade would have been one of the most prosperous in American history. The book Buchanan cites does make reference to the six years from 1989 to 1995: Over that period, which contains a recession, average family income fell not by 6 percent but by 0.6 percent.

Patrick J. Buchanan
The Great Betrayal
How American Sovereignty and Social Justice Are Sacrificed to Gods of the Global Economy
Little Brown, 320 pp., $22.95

Intending to show how free trade has chipped away at manufacturing, Buchanan complains that "America's share of world industrial exports was fast shrinking: from 32 percent in 1950, to 28 percent by 1960, to 20 percent in 1973." But why stop in 1973? According to the World Trade Organization's 1996 annual report, in 1963 the U.S. accounted for 17.4 percent of world exports of manufactures, and in 1973 it accounted for 12.8 percent—but in 1995 it accounted for 12.4 percent. In other words, it's certainly true that America owns a smaller share of the world economy than it did immediately after the rest of the world had been ravaged by the Second World War. But even granting the eccentric view that national share of world exports provides a valid way to measure a nation's economic condition, America's relative position for the past twenty-five years has held steady. Measured in just about any other way, America's economic hegemony is more commanding today than at almost any other moment in the nation's history.

Buchanan, it must be said, is a great storyteller, and one of his most affecting stories describes the impact of foreign competition on American workers. On the campaign trail in 1992, visiting a New Hampshire pulp and paper mill, he shakes the hand of a subdued worker who breaks his downcast silence to plead, "Save our jobs." But there's an intellectual step that must be taken here, and Buchanan—who repeatedly expresses his disdain for economic reasoning—refuses to take it.

If America heeded that New Hampshire millworker and imposed a prohibitive tariff on foreign pulp and paper, American pulp and paper prices would quickly rise. That would be very nice for the owners of American mills, and—who knows?—they might even share some of the windfall with Buchanan's men on the line. But the tariff would have the

David Frum is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

effect of hiking the price of every cardboard box used to ship computers to Brazil and Argentina, the price of every medical textbook sold to India and Pakistan, the price of the liner in every compact disk American companies market in Germany and the Czech Republic. Insulating one industry from world standards of price and quality inevitably damage the ability of every other company in America to meet those standards in its own market.

Similarly, the tariff on Mexican lettuce and tomatoes that Buchanan wants would raise the price of produce for every household in America. Buchanan makes much of statistics showing that manufacturing wages in Germany now exceed those in the United States. But one reason that disposable incomes in the United States remain so much higher than they are in Europe is that Americans are not obliged to pay double and triple the world price for the food they eat.

Protectionism is an attempt to raise standards of living by systematically raising prices. As such, it is almost by definition bound to fail. That's not merely a theoretical point. When put to the test, protectionism *has* failed—as the Brazilians know. And the Mexicans. And the people of India.

Buchanan tries to deny this record of failure, citing the spectacular growth of the United States under protectionism in the late nineteenth century. Generations of high-school students have groaned when their textbook opened to the tariff controversy in post-Civil War America, but surprisingly enough, this tariff history provides the most entertaining and informative part of *The Great Betrayal*. Such dusty, half-forgotten characters as Justin Morrill—for thirty years one of the most powerful politicians in Washington—spring to unexpectedly vivid life. And much of what Buchanan has to say about America's protectionist past is not entirely wrong. Protectionism probably did, in some ways, accelerate American industrialization. But that acceleration came at a terrible price, and it is a price that Buchanan declines to reckon or recount.

The apogee of American protectionism from 1873 to 1913 was, not coincidentally, a period stained by enormous internal strife. These were the years of the Pullman strike and the Haymarket Massacre, of Tom Watson and Mother Jones and the assassinations of Presidents Garfield and McKinley.

Americans who grew wheat and cotton, who felled timber and mined copper, were highly dependent on export markets. The goods they sold were priced at world prices, but tariffs ensured that the things they bought—from farm equipment to shoes—were priced far above the world prices. The trade policy of the late nineteenth century brutally exploited the South and West, and the farmers, loggers, and miners knew it. Buchanan calls present-day America a colony of Japan. It would be much closer to the truth to say that under the Morrill and McKinley tariffs, two-thirds of America was a colony of New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Massachusetts.

PROTECTIONISM ATTEMPTS TO RAISE LIVING STANDARDS BY RAISING PRICES. ALMOST BY DEFINITION, IT'S BOUND TO FAIL.

And even within the industrial Northeast, protectionism intensified class conflicts. Workers knew that business acumen alone was not what built the vast fortunes of the Andrew Carnegies and the Henry Clay Fricks. The government propelled certain men toward unimaginable wealth by barring potential competitors, and it was natural that their employees dreamed of using the same rough, coercive methods to get a share of the boodle. Anger in the South and West, anger in the mill and on the shop floor, helped elect in 1912 the first Democratic president in sixteen years—and a free-trade Congress as well, which in 1913 reduced tariffs to levels undreamed of since before 1860. The First World War cut that free-trade experiment short, and in the 1920s the resurgent Republicans repealed it.

It's here that Buchanan manages to land his one good punch. The most notorious tariff in American history is the Smoot-Hawley tariff of 1930, which the current generation of conservative politicians and journalists has convinced itself sparked the Great Depression. How, Buchanan demands, can a tariff enacted in 1930 cause a slump that began in 1929? And how, he demands even more forcefully, can a 1930 tariff have proved so catastrophic, when the much more onerous Fordney-McCumber tariff of 1922 failed to halt the Roaring Twenties?

The answer is that Fordney-McCumber was indeed a catastrophe that can fairly be said to have caused the Great Depression—but conservatives prefer to avoid saying so because they want desperately to vindicate the once-vilified tax-cutting administrations of Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge. The tariffs of Harding and Coolidge must be innocent, and therefore the Smoot-Hawley tariff signed by the tax-raising Herbert Hoover must be guilty.

Hoover's economic record is indeed appalling. But we ought not to blind ourselves to the consequences of the blind economic isolationism of his predecessors. At the end of the First World War, the bloodied and starving Europeans desperately needed things they could get only from America: food to feed their people and machines to rebuild their factories and farms. To obtain those

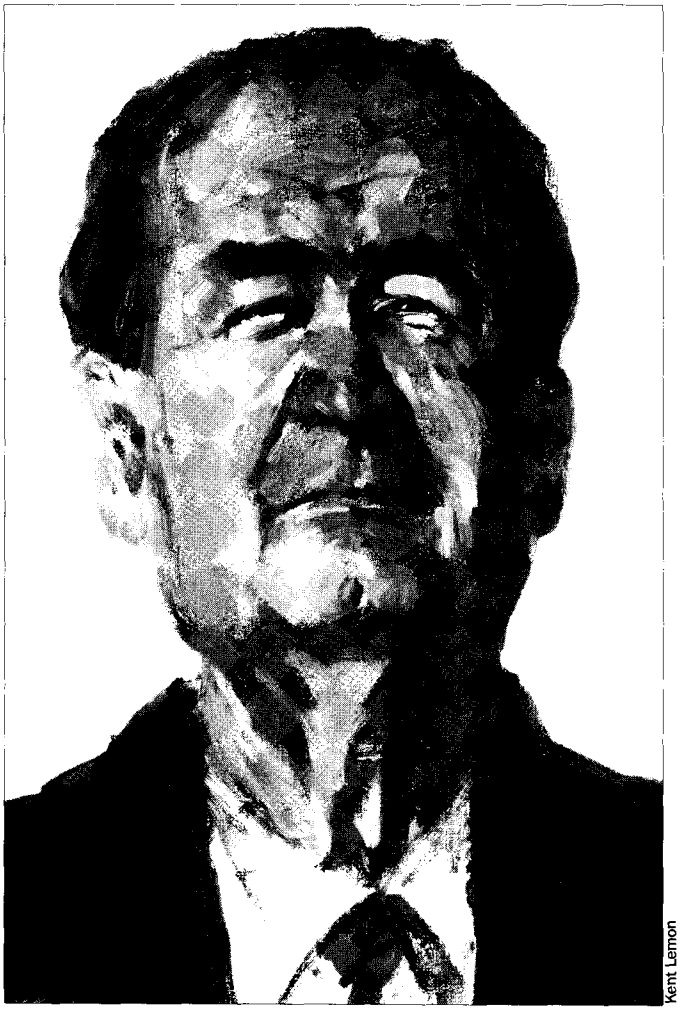
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

things, they needed dollars, and the only way to get dollars was to sell European goods in America. But the tariff of 1922 had slammed the door.

Unable to export to America, the Europeans—with the active support of the U.S. government—began borrowing instead. Huge loans were made to German companies and German towns, and loans very nearly as big were floated throughout the rest of the continent as well. This massive borrowing threatened to drive up the value of U.S. currency on international money markets, and the Federal Reserve held down the rising dollar in the only way it could, cutting interest rates in the 1920s to nearly zero. That will start a pretty good economic party, and off the Twenties roared.

Buchanan is thus right that high tariffs in some sense drove the prosperity of the 1920s. But it was a precarious prosperity. Ultra-low interest rates invite inflation, and by 1929 the Federal Reserve was forced to hike rates in order to stabilize prices. In the United States, that triggered the recession of 1930. In Europe, the effect was horrific. Thanks to Fordney-McCumber, the European economies were all built on colossal debt to the United States. The Germans in particular were not only borrowing to buy what they needed; they were soon borrowing to pay the interest on prior borrowings.

Without access to the world's richest markets (the British had turned protectionist in the 1920s, too), and without much of an internal market after the inflation of 1923 wiped out what remained of domestic savings, the German economy failed. When the rise in American interest rates in 1929 brought money flooding back from Europe, German borrowers began to default—which wiped out deposits in the American banks that had lent to them—which forced those banks to recall their domestic loans—which bankrupted borrowers across the United States. By the time it all ended in 1933, the American money supply had contracted by some 25 percent and one in four Americans was out of work.



Kent Lemon

As the victim tumbled down the stairs, Senator Smoot and Congressman Hawley gave him a kick to hurry his progress. But the fundamental error had been made with the Fordney-McCumber tariff eight years before.

After 1945, America applied the lesson it had learned in 1922. But Buchanan—and Ross Perot and the steel companies and the AFL-CIO, not to mention the trade hawks of the Department of Commerce and the protectionist Washington think tanks and lobby groups—forgets what that lesson fundamentally was. America is like a fat man on a park bench: If he sits on the wrong spot, he upends the bench like a teeter-totter, and not just his trading partners but he himself lands hard. The prosperity of the United States is inescapably related to that of the rest of the world.

And it always has been so. America has always been a great trading nation: a great importer, a great exporter, a great borrower, a great lender. This is not dependence or a derogation from national sovereignty. It is commerce. At the very end of *The Great Betrayal*, Buchanan drops some hint that he understands all this—that he realizes America's connections cannot be severed. He just does not like them.

The man is entitled to his preferences and aversions, but he ought not to pretend that his preferences would enrich the country when the evidence is so overwhelming against him. It is Pat Buchanan, not the free traders, who wants to reduce the standard of living of the average citizen in the name of an abstract ideological project. He hopes to persuade America's conservatives to follow him. It would be suicide if they did—for them, for the country, and for the world economy. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONFESSOR OF THE HOUSE

Gingrich Shoulders the Blame

By Fred Barnes

Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich says he blew it, trying to govern the country from Capitol Hill. It was "inexcusable" for him to have "cavalierly underrated the power of the president." Just as bad, he says, was his confusing the enthusiasm of conservatives after the 1994 congressional election with an urgent mandate. Also, he spent too much time working for what was desirable rather than for what was necessary. And, yes, he often hasn't known when to shut up. Whining to reporters about having been forced to leave the president's plane by the back door was "the single most avoidable mistake I made" as speaker, he says. But, of course, there were other blunders: failing to pay attention to the House dissidents who wound up plotting to overthrow him, and attempting to attach a Republican amendment on the census to a disaster-relief bill. As for the budget fiasco in 1995, Gingrich says he's the one primarily responsible for all the political damage it caused Republicans.

This is amazing stuff, and I've only scraped the surface of *Lessons Learned the Hard Way*, Gingrich's confession of his first three years as speaker. Maybe there's been another active political leader to come forward in the modern era and admit serious mistakes as boldly and candidly as Gingrich has. If so, I missed it. And that's what makes Gingrich's new book so interesting and fun to read: It's one of a kind. Politicians normally go out of their way to make themselves invulnerable. Troubles? Bumps in the road? Defeats? They're all routinely blamed on someone else. Gingrich has done plenty of that sort of transferring the guilt—but not in this book. He not only accepts blame for mistakes that weren't entirely his fault, like trying to do too much, too soon. He even credits those—Haley Barbour, Representative Bob Livingston, Tony Blankley, to name three—who warned him to avoid certain errors in the first place.

John Kascht

If there's a strategy behind *Lessons Learned the Hard Way*, my guess is it's going to work. If Gingrich aimed to please, he did. Liberals won't ever warm to Gingrich, but conservatives who've been alienated by Gingrich's pragmatism and lack of ideological zeal are likely to. The newly vulnerable Gingrich is simply more appealing than the old Gingrich who unself-consciously spoke of himself as a leader for the centuries, or the wonkish Gingrich whose first book as House speaker, the 1995 *To Renew America*, was one of the most boring and pretentious volumes of the late twentieth century.

What Gingrich seems to have discovered, as his poll numbers sank and President Clinton's soared, is that the personal will of a single ambitious leader isn't enough to prevail in Washington. To know this beforehand, all he had to do was ponder the presidency of Lyndon Johnson for a moment. It turns out there are rules that apply in national politics and policymaking, and any leader who ignores them or violates them is bound to get into trouble. Gingrich—and this is the point of the book—found out the hard way.

Some of the most commonsensical rules apply to dealings with the press, and Gingrich was oblivious to all of them. In the predawn hours after Republicans captured Congress in 1994, he granted an interview to reporters from the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* and mused about the left-wing background of the Clintons. The *Post* headline the next day was: "Gingrich Lobs a Few More Bombs." With that, "all my effort to reach out and establish a good working relationship with the President" was nullified.

The rule that applied? Actually, two did. First, "nothing good happens after eleven P.M." Gingrich says, "What was once applied to teenagers . . . might equally refer to press interviews." And second, "the elite press will never cover your message if you

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

give them an excuse to cover anything else."

His complaint about being shuffled off the back of Air Force One after a trip to Yitzhak Rabin's funeral in Israel taught him another rule: "The press is always ready to pounce," particularly on a conservative. The day after he complained, the New York *Daily News* labeled him "Crybaby" in a banner headline. Only after numerous media attacks, however, did Gingrich learn "what was most important about conservative dealings with the press," which is that the media aren't really all that important. "We have to learn to speak over the media, around them as well as through them, to reach our true audience, who are the ordinary people of America," Gingrich says.

The hardest rule for Gingrich to swallow was that Clinton has an automatic advantage in press coverage so long as he's fighting with a conservative. Ken Starr and Linda Tripp would do well to keep this in mind. For one thing, Gingrich says, "the White House media operation trumps any effort of that kind by the Congress." Though Washington correspondents may enjoy keeping various Clinton scandals alive, "when it came to policy the media were bound to be with him." Reporters often pick on Clinton mercilessly, Gingrich notes, "but when conservatives are the opponent, they will enthusiastically volunteer to be his echo chamber."

There are limits to Gingrich's candor. He says Representative Bill Paxon of New York, who joined the plotters against Gingrich in 1997, is "a terrific talent," a friend, and someone who has "a great future in politics." I suspect Gingrich's honest view of Paxon, who is leaving politics altogether this fall, is far harsher. So, too, his take on the conservative press. "Our troubles with the self-deceiving liberals were oddly enough compounded by the problems we were also experiencing in 1997 with certain conservative journals of opinion and editorial columns," he says mildly. In truth, he's known to be infuriated with conservative writers who attacked him for the budget deal with Clinton, a deal he still claims was achieved "largely on our terms."

Gingrich occasionally slips into politician's cant. He endorses a "dialogue about our future" that will produce "goals for a generation." He says Republicans must be "entrepreneurs of social policy." But *Lessons Learned the Hard Way* is mostly devoted to his failures and how similar ones can be avoided in the future. It helps, he says, to ignore the buzz in Washington. Margaret Thatcher "had a firm rule that she would not read anything negative about what she was up to because it might weaken her morale and distort her judgment." Ronald Reagan had a "similar knack" for ignoring his critics. Gingrich is eager to emulate them.

Newt Gingrich
Lessons Learned the Hard Way
A Personal Report
HarperCollins, 229 pp., $25

His goal is to get Republicans back on offense in Washington. Gingrich understands the peril of "permanent defense." It's what happens when "you rule an issue out of order because it makes liberals uncomfortable." It's what would have happened if George Bush in his 1988 election campaign had dropped the Willie Horton issue.

Liberals, says Gingrich, understand the need to stay on offense: They "never take no for an answer." Any conservative leader, he says, "could learn a lot" by studying Democratic senator Ted Kennedy's "ability to get hit, attacked, dismissed, and smilingly keep moving forward." Gingrich has already done so. Thus, it's time for him to stick to the rules, emulate Kennedy, and tell us in his next book about the great conservative victories he will have achieved. ♦

PLAYING THE GREENS

Jackets, Fairways, and Dollars at Augusta

By Jay Nordlinger

If April is here and the dogwood is blooming in Augusta, Georgia, it must be time for the Masters, the world's most cherished golf tournament. This unique event is at the center of every golfer's imagination. To win it is to earn mythical status. The other major tournaments—the U.S. Open, the British Open, and the PGA—have their places, and some Americans and Britons may even profess that what they most desire is their national title. But no one is fooled. It is the Masters that inflames their ambition, the Masters that makes their hands bleed on the practice range.

Curt Sampson
The Masters
Golf, Money, and Power in Augusta, Georgia
Villard, 256 pp., $25.50

Why this should be is the subject of countless books, articles, and conversations. On the key points, all agree. First, there is the universally felt reverence for the tournament's founder, Bobby Jones. Second, there is the fact that the Masters, alone among "majors," takes place at the same site every year,

Jay Nordlinger is associate editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

allowing for—as the television slogan has it—"a tradition like no other." And third, there is the history of six and a half decades' play, in which giants have triumphed and failed, and golf's memories have been formed: Sarazen lacing his four-wood for a double eagle; Hogan losing his nerve on the greens; Arnie sucking on a cigarette and charging hard; DeVicenzo guilelessly signing an incorrect scorecard; Nicklaus exulting over a long, serpentine putt on Number Sixteen; Norman faltering yet again on Sunday; and Tiger trouncing the rest of the field. The Masters is a relatively new competition in a centuries-old sport, but, amazingly, it and the game have become almost inseparable.

What, then, amid pervasive *Masterslust*, does Curt Sampson have to add? Enough, it transpires. The author of 1996's bestselling *Hogan*, Sampson has now tackled the Masters and its sponsor, the Augusta National Golf Club. When it came to the club itself, Sampson had no easy task, as Augusta National is notoriously secretive, making the Masons seem positively exhibitionistic by comparison. Indeed, the club's members are forbidden to speak to a writer working on an unauthorized book. More than one member has been expelled for loose talk. Yet Sampson has managed to penetrate the gates, interviewing members and employees, both present and former, under circumstances resembling those of a witness-protection program.

Villard Press

Bobby Jones, in cart, and President Eisenhower pose with the Gang at Augusta.

Jones established the club in 1932, the tournament in 1934. (He never wanted it called "The Masters," for reasons of modesty, but others prevailed.) His partner was Clifford Roberts, a hard, spiteful soul who was possibly the most powerful man in golf, and certainly the most feared. Theirs was a curious friendship—Jones so pure and beloved; Roberts so twisted and despised. Sampson guesses that Jones simply liked to be taken care of, and Roberts, a lord of Wall Street, was good at it. He could run or fix anything. He oversaw Jones's financial affairs and attended to every chore at Augusta, leaving the master free to write his books, listen to music, and, tragically, battle the illness that, in 1971, would claim his life. As Sampson puts it, "Roberts was the iron fist inside Jones's velvet glove."

Sampson's most valuable contribution in his *Masters* is his portrayal of Roberts. Born in 1894, Roberts grew up in the hardscrabble Midwest and, later, East Texas. Both of his parents killed themselves. After serving in World War I, Roberts returned to Texas, where he found his way into the oil business. By 1923, he was rich. His fortune in his pocket, he went to New York, where he bought a large percentage of the brokerage that would become Dean Witter. Through Jones, a scion of Atlanta, Roberts met the powerful managers of Coca-Cola, and the two friends were awarded a bottling business in South America.

When Roberts himself committed suicide—putting a gun to his head on the grounds of Augusta in 1977—he was worth over $100 million. The bulk of his estate he left to Planned Parenthood, for Roberts abhorred children. He once kept a prospective member out of the club because the man had five sons and daughters. As far as Roberts was concerned, "anyone stupid enough" to have that many offspring "isn't smart enough to belong to Augusta National." His own parents had also had five children.

In a life tinged with darkness, Roberts was extremely lucky in one respect (aside from the money): He became an intimate of his two heroes, Jones and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Roberts met Ike in 1948 and immediately cultivated his friendship (Augusta National not being a bad lure for a golf-mad general). When Eisenhower landed an advance for a war memoir, he promptly handed it over to Roberts to invest for him. At the club, Roberts built Eisenhower a house and a pond. He also introduced him to Augusta's big-money boys, whom Eisenhower would come to know as the "Gang." These men shepherded his way to the White House.

All the while, Roberts was making himself indispensable to Eisenhower.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In 1952, when Eisenhower was persuaded to run for president, Roberts was at his side, leaning on delegates favorable to Robert A. Taft and accompanying Eisenhower on the stump. He operated as bag man for the campaign, breaking laws as he went. He also took care of a small woman problem—Kay Summersby, who was grumbling about her humble salary and one-room apartment. Roberts, in the style that Vernon Jordan would later make famous, arranged for her to have a comfortable job at American Express.

The day after the election, the president-elect flew to Augusta National. He would return there twenty-nine times during his presidency. As for Roberts, he spent one hundred and twenty nights at the White House, leaving personal belongings in the Red Room, which the mansion's staff knew as "Mr. Roberts's room." On the days when they were not together, Eisenhower and Roberts corresponded.

Sampson's book therefore contains a touch of political history, and of social history, too, as he describes the uneasy relationship between the town of Augusta and the strange, unwelcoming club in its midst. He handles the topic of race nicely, although probably to excess, devoting more space to Augusta natives Butterfly McQueen, Beau Jack Walker, and James Brown than to Nelson, Hogan, and Snead. He also recounts the familiar tales of the caddies, with their incomparable names: Cemetery, 8-Ball, Stovepipe, Rat, Three Fingers. The book often waxes sociological—every sportswriter's disease—but it does not do so unintelligently.

In *The Masters*, Sampson displays all the virtues found in his Hogan book, chief among them perspicacity, humor, and grace. Yet the book has its faults: Its organization is haphazard; its musical references (necessary for Jones) are foolish; it imposes an eye-glazing discourse on agronomy; it incorrectly captions a famous photo of Nicklaus in 1975; and it omits the most stirring Masters victory of all—Nicklaus's in 1986.

But the book delivers on the promise of its subtitle, to record the story of "golf, power, and money" at Augusta. It is the golf, of course, that ultimately matters most, for those who fantasize about the Masters could hardly care less about the power and the money, the pomposity and airs of the club, deservedly mocked. When they swing their clubs on their hard-baked municipal courses, or on the tattered mats of their practice ranges, they are striping a fairway wood over Rae's Creek, hitting a precise iron to the sixteenth green, and, in the late-afternoon sun, being helped into the green jacket by the previous year's champion. Not for nothing is the Masters "the toughest ticket in sports." The tournament has been sold out since 1972, and its waiting list was closed in 1978. There is—it is true—nothing else, anywhere, like it. ♦

Are you like most people... nervous about the stock market?
What would a decline in the stock market do to your stocks, mutual funds and retirement accounts?
Did you know that if your funds are in the stock market, your principle is at risk?

MIB Financial
1-800-575-1566
A full service, asset growth and protection company

We have something *with* STOCK MARKET RETURNS— *without* STOCK MARKET RISKS.

Yes, STOCK MARKET RETURNS without STOCK MARKET RISKS.

What would you say to:

* **12%** Fixed Returns on a 12-month program.
* **21%** Fixed Returns on an 18-month program.

With No Market Risk!

Your Principal is...

- Fully Secured *and*
- I.R.A. & S.E.P. Qualified

* *Maturity dates may vary.*
Total contractual return cannot be considered an A.P.R.

Call **1-800-575-1566** to find out what your stock broker doesn't want you to know.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SCULPTING HAPPINESS

The National Gallery Exhibits Alexander Calder

By Pia Nordlinger

At the age of nine, the twentieth-century American sculptor Alexander Calder drew a self-portrait—a picture of a boy working on a block of wood with a hacksaw, a broad smile of contentment on his face. Every artist produces art that expresses in one way or another his personality. What distinguishes Calder from virtually every other artist, however, is that his own personality was so *happy*, apparently from birth. The joy he childishly depicted at nine never faded but matured into the uncomplicated, playful, happy art of his adulthood.

Repeatedly commissioned in later life to fill public spaces with his sculpture, Calder left an enormous body of popular work. There are his mobiles, the hanging sculptures he was renowned for inventing, like the brightly colored one that swings above the lobby in New York's Kennedy Airport. And then there are what he called his "stabiles," massive structures of bent metal, like the bright-red sculpture that stands in Chicago's Federal Center plaza.

In celebration of his centenary, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., has gathered over 260 pieces for its exhibition *Alexander Calder: 1898-1976*, which opened on March 29 and runs until July 12. This retrospective is particularly noteworthy, for Calder's mobiles and stabiles are almost all inevitably isolated in their public spaces. Not just in the airports and office buildings in which many of them are displayed, but even in sculpture gardens and museums, the works are difficult to place in their artistic and historical contexts. The National Gallery's show allows viewers to see for the first time just how Calder grew as an artist, developing his sense of line, color, and motion. As he learned to amalgamate his love of invention and his whimsy with his training in art and engineering, he created a wholly new form of art. And yet, what visitors will at last take away from the exhibition is mostly a sense that there is no inner darkness or political agenda running through Calder's work, but only his light-hearted attention to serious-hearted art.

As a young man, Calder had planned a different career. Born and reared near Philadelphia, he showed an early talent for construction, creating toys, games, and jewelry for his sister's dolls. Although his father and his grandfather were both classical sculptors, and his mother a painter, the family urged him to find a more lucrative profession, and in 1915, at the age of eighteen, he enrolled at the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey, as a student of mechanical engineering. After graduation, however, the young man quickly grew dissatisfied with engineering and began studies at New York's Art Students' League in 1923.

Calder's paintings from his student days are unimpressive, the best of them *The Flying Trapeze*—an early example of the circus scenes that would remain one of his favorite subjects. More important than the content, however, is what the painting reveals about even the young Calder's fascination with motion. While detailed bodies of trapeze artists soar above a stationary and faceless crowd, protective nets form swooping rectangles and triangles—shapes that bear a strong similarity to the ones Calder would use later in his monumental steel sculptures.

Intent on improving his painting, Calder went to Paris in 1926. He managed, however, to do little painting there. What he did create was an enormously popular miniature circus. Calder captivated his friends with little clowns, sword swallowers, lions, and horses, all made of wire. Each act was a surprise of movement and cleverly timed tricks. The National Gallery's exhibition includes a videotape of Calder ringleading his wire circus, and it reveals his clever humor and joyful manner.

It was natural for Calder simply to adapt his techniques to a larger scale. Using wire in the same way his teacher, John Sloan, had taught him to use a brush to draw, Calder captured in formal outlines people, animals, and even classic themes. In the wire sculpture *Rearing Stallion*, for example, the stallion's jutting chest and arched back make the creature look ready to leap off its stand. Calder's artistic training taught him the economy of line necessary to shape the beautiful figure, and his mechanical training taught him how to balance it on just two pieces of wire.

In 1930, however, Calder caught the modernist, abstract bug. Visiting the studio of Piet Mondrian, he experienced what he called "the shock that started things." "Though I had heard the word 'modern' before, I did not consciously know or feel the term 'abstract,'" he later wrote. "So now, at thirty-two, I wanted to paint and work in the abstract." He joined Abstraction-Création, a group of artists formed in opposition to the Surrealists, and in 1931 held his first show.

Given his friendships with the Parisian avant-garde—Man Ray, Joan Miró, Jean Arp, Fernand Léger—Calder's modernist transition is not surprising, and pieces from the early 1930s reveal the shift in his art. The works he called "constellations" are made in either black and white or

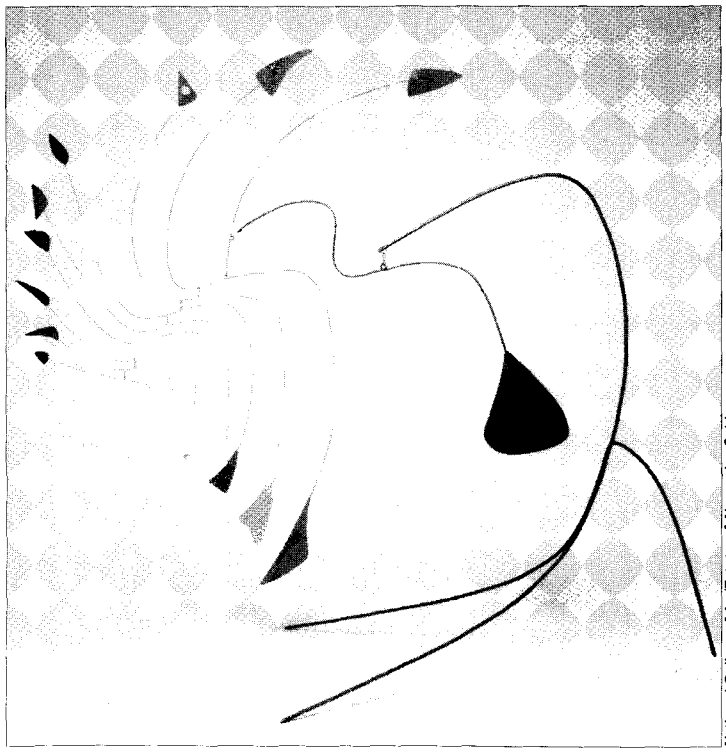
Pia Nordlinger is a reporter at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

primary colors. With bolder wire lines and simple, geometric shapes, the result is more abstract and more professional than he had achieved earlier. In *Little Ball with Counterweight*, for example, a white ball sits on a black square table supported by a wire tripod. A straight piece of black wire with a small red ball at the end shoots up from the white ball, and another black wire curves into the space below the table. In this study in perfect balance, the little white ball remains in place with simple color and simple lines.

Calder's ultimate aim, however, was motion. "I suggested to Mondrian," he wrote, "that perhaps it would be fun to make [his] rectangles oscillate, and he, with a very serious countenance, said: 'No, it is not necessary, my painting is already very fast.'" In 1933, Calder created his earliest and simplest mobile—*Cône d'ébène*, three ebony pieces attached to two metal bars hanging from the ceiling. During the 1930s and '40s, Calder poured out his increasingly complicated and brightly colored mobiles, their counterweights balancing more and more delicate wire rods and panels, their forms and titles laced with his humor. Some hung from ceilings, some stood on the floor, some were small enough to fit in the palm of the hand, and together they brought Calder acclaim from the art world.

The number of mobiles in the National Gallery exhibition is impressive, but perhaps even more helpful for forming an impression of Calder's career is the display of the drawings and paintings that sparked his drive to work in three-dimensional sculpture. Focusing on Calder's career from the 1920s to the 1950s, the National Gallery includes Calder's later accomplishments as a public artist only glancingly, with miniature models standing in for his twenty-, thirty-, and forty-foot sculptures. On view, however, are many privately owned works rarely shown, including his wire constellations, jewelry, and early mobiles. Several others have never been shown in public before: a wire sculpture of Calvin Coolidge, for example, and the simply titled *Black Frame*—a cross between sculpture and painting in which a sphere, a flat circle, and a helix rotate, powered by a hidden motor and surrounded by a black frame.



National Gallery of Art/Estate of Alexander Calder

Little Spider, *an Alexander Calder sculpture, c. 1940*

Calder never took himself or his art too seriously, and he consequently ran the risk of not being taken seriously by others. Some critics claim that his range is too limited, his style now too familiar, and there are few scholarly studies of his work. Marla Prather, curator of the National Gallery's exhibit, points out that most books about Calder are picture books that do not distinguish his major artworks from his toys and the things he made for his wife Louisa's kitchen. One exception is the 1991 *Alexander Calder*, written by Joan Marter, a Rutgers University professor of art history. Analyzing Calder's work in its historical context, Marter explores how Calder "relates to French modernism, how he relates to American art, what he contributes to kineticism, and the related contemporary art and technology of the time of his creations."

With only Calder's work shown, the National Gallery's exhibition will not give viewers much of this context. But they will at least gain a sense of Calder's own development. His world-famous mobiles were the result of a long process, and through this new retrospective, visitors can watch that process unfold.

It is not surprising that Calder became the first American sculptor to achieve an international reputation. He came from a family devoted to art, studied with some of America's finest teachers, befriended some of the most influential modern artists, and developed a new form of sculpture. But his work, even at its most abstract, appeals to children, their parents, and art buffs alike—for he added to his modernist talent and ingenuity what even the least sophisticated viewer can sense: There is in this man's life and work something few other artists have, something deeply and genuinely happy. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The sophisticated traveler is unfazed by the burning sun. Shielded by a rainbow umbrella from Ralph Lauren's Sahib collection (Bloomingdale's, $325), he lounges in a Salvatore Ferragamo three-button wool suit ($1,125), watching the local dance troupe with his Lord Kitchener-style straw hat (Saks Fifth Avenue, $225) placed strategically on his lap. The Johnny Depp shades (Armani, $325) complete the whole White Man's Burden look. His host might be offended by the yak dung he has stepped in, but his alligator boots (Nieman Marcus, $650) keep him well protected. Groove on, great white hunter.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Why should your job or family prevent your completing a college degree?

It didn't stop these people.

Johnna

28, Nurse

"Even if I move before I get my degree, I won't lose credits or have to transfer."

Richard

38, Sales Rep

"Everyone thought I had my degree. Thanks to Liberty's Distance Learning Program, now I do!"

Barbara

45, Mother of four

"My husband is disabled. Without Liberty I could never have gone to college.

Charles

25, Marine

"The main thing for me was flexibility. Liberty helped me work around my schedule."

Throughout the past thirteen years over twenty-five thousand men and women from all walks of life, have furthered their education through the Liberty University Distance Learning Program. Thousands of them have earned undergraduate or graduate degrees. *All of them did it without going back to school because school came to them!*

Who are these people? ***They are people just like you*** *-- people busy with family and careers who understand the value of a college degree.*

Call 1-800-424-9595 for a FREE video and catalog of course offerings.

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

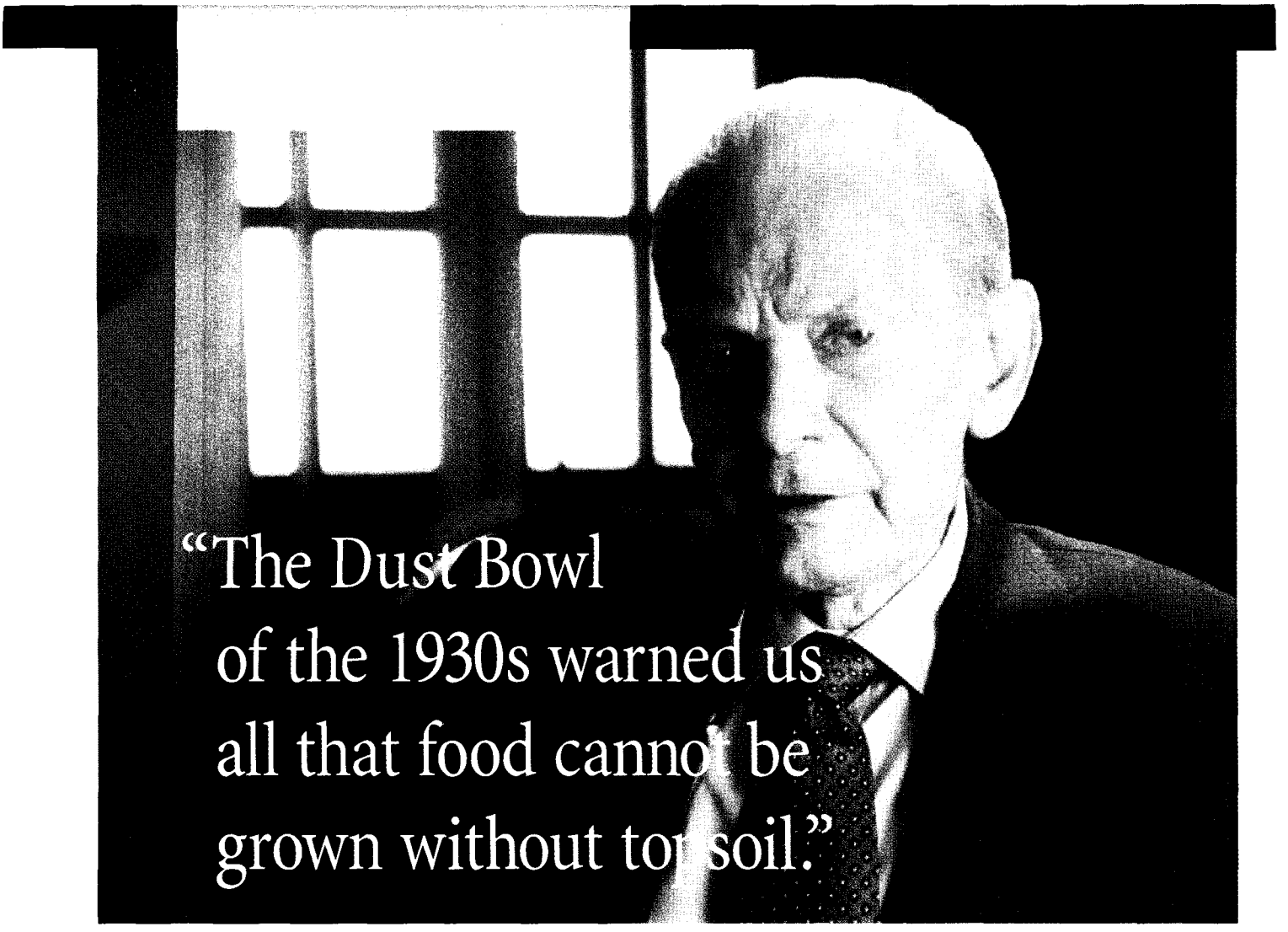
www.liberty.edu

We're Changing Lives... One Degree at a Time.

Liberty University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate, bachelor, master's, and doctoral level degrees. Liberty does not discriminate in the admission of students on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, age or physical disability.

NCAA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"The effects of wind and water are causing us to lose the fertile topsoil that took nature thousands of years to create.

"Fortunately, today's farmers are leading a change in the way they work the land, in order to feed the world's growing population. Instead of the old methods of plowing, for instance, many use no-till farming, which leaves the soil virtually undisturbed. Stalks and leaves help hold the soil in place, improving wildlife habitat and keeping our waterways cleaner.

"Conservation efforts now save nearly a billion tons of soil per year. That's going to make a difference for the generations to come."

www.admworld.com

supermarket to the world

ADM

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED